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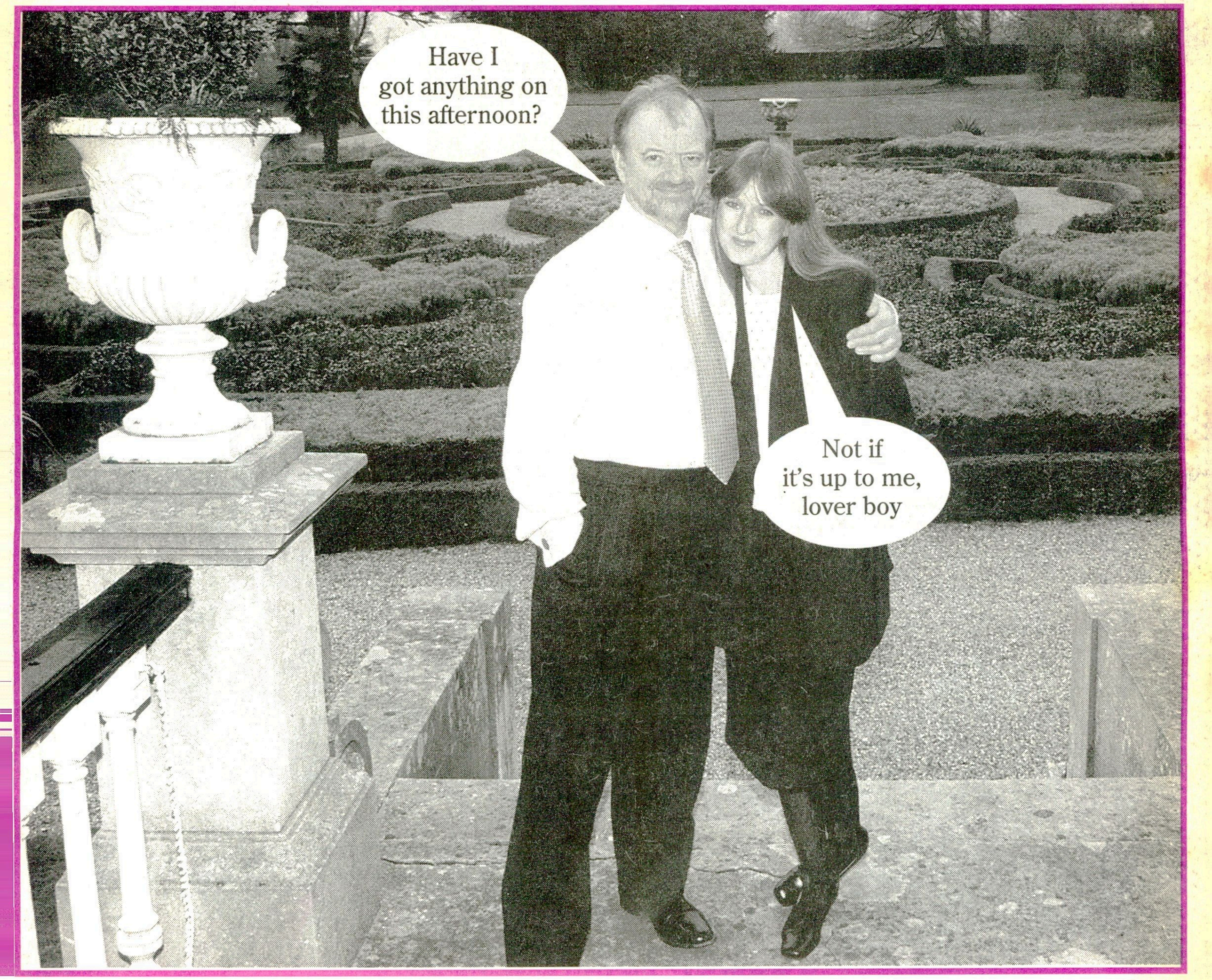

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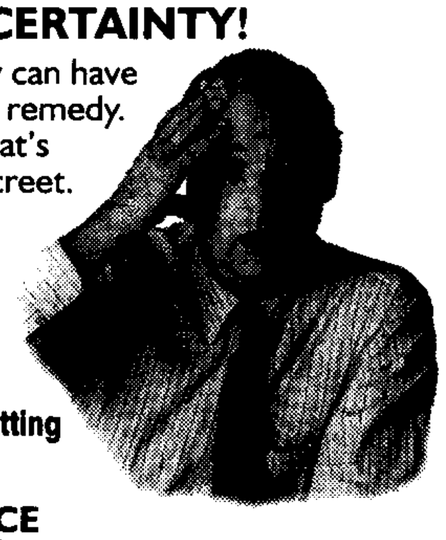

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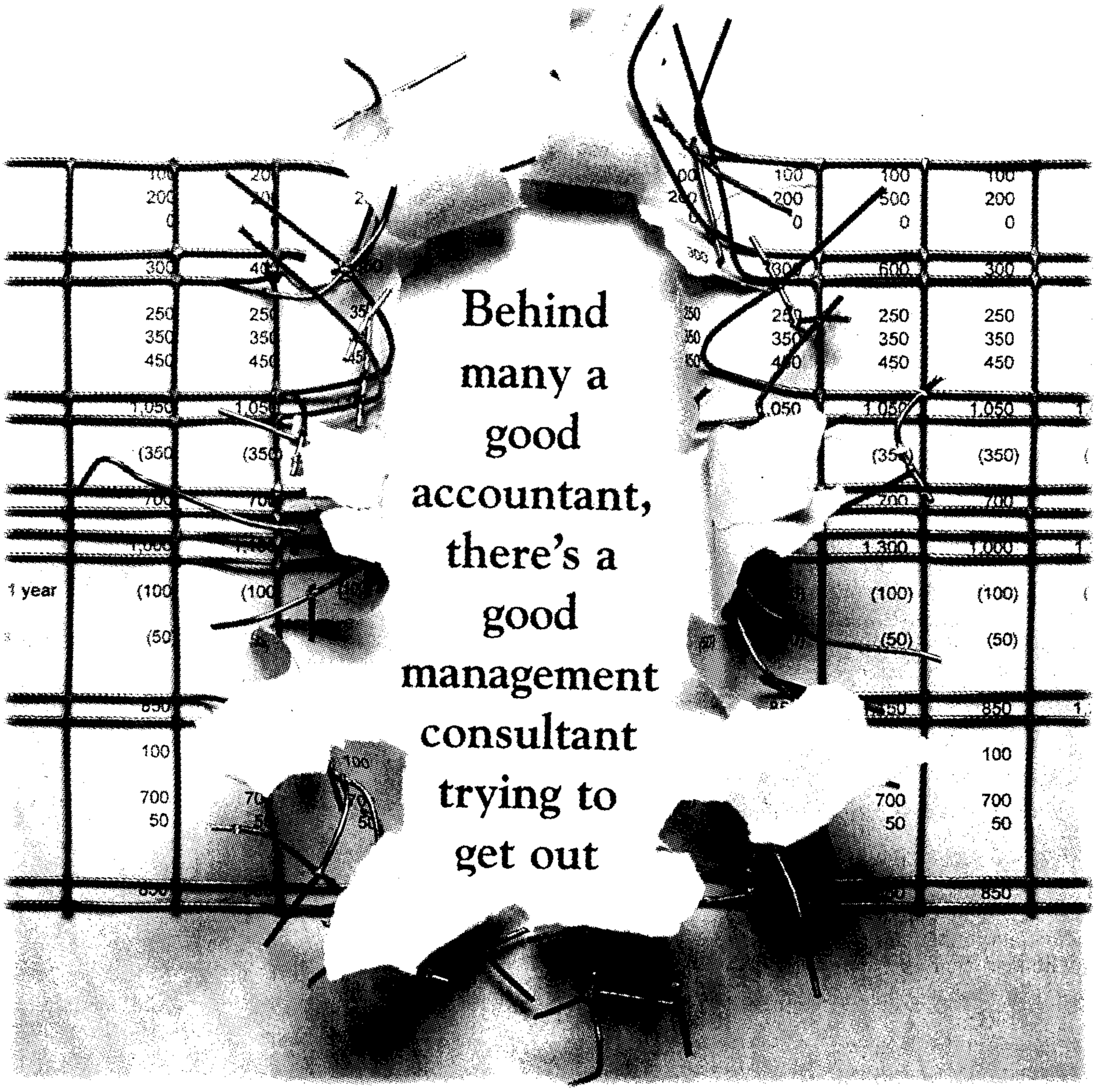

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Gnome

THE suggestion that I have put pressure on the Prime Minister to assist my takeover of the prestigious Italian television station, Tittibummi Canale 69, is entirely without foundation, although true in every detail.

The idea that I would blackmail the Prime Minister to further my business interests is as outrageous as it is correct.

For the record, what actually happened was as follows:

I rang Mr Tony Blair in the middle of the night and happened to mention that he should get out of bed and get round to my office at once.

When he arrived I explained to him that a call from him to the Italian Prime Minister would save me a great deal of time and money and incidentally ensure headlines in my newspaper *Daily Gnome*, along the lines of "Tony Is Wonderful", "Isn't Tony Marvellous" and "Leonardo DiCaprio Says Vote Labour".

Mr Blair made the independent decision to do exactly what I told him although he understandably chose to lie about this later.

As a result, I felt obliged to reveal Mr Blair's duplicity over this matter and ordered the *Daily Gnome* to run the supportive headline: "Yes, It's Tony Bl-iar".

I hope this clears up any misunderstanding Mr Blair may have had about who is in charge.

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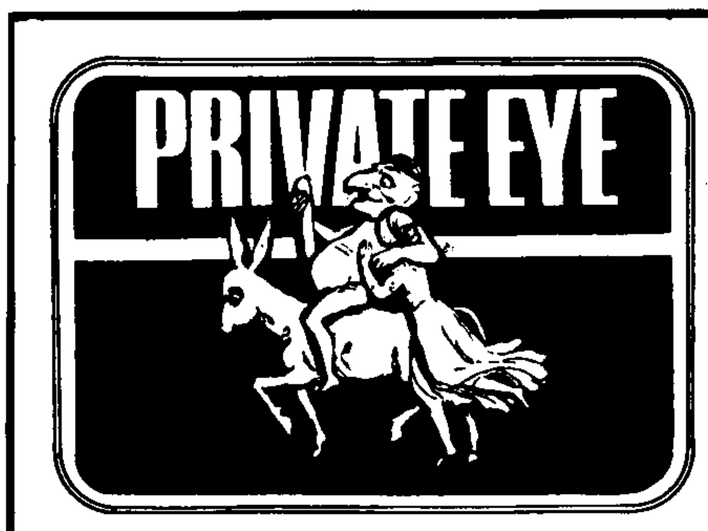


COLOUR SECTION

LABOUR is still giving responsibility to the pensions pirates: social security minister Harriet Harman has reappointed John Bowman, a director of Commercial Union, to the board of the Occupational Pensions Regulatory Authority (OPRA), which is meant to protect workplace pensions from Maxwell-style rip-offs.

Commercial Union, meanwhile, has been "named and shamed" by the treasury for a total of 7,956 possible mis-sold pensions, of which more than a third are still awaiting redress. The victims were seduced out of safe occupational pensions in favour of poor Commercial Union alternatives.

Since Bowman's appointment to OPRA, Quilter Fund Management, a subsidiary of Commercial Union, has been fined £125,000 by IMRO for cheating PEP investors by not paying interest to them. Trouble with the regulators is nothing new to Bowman's company. In 1994 Lautro fined it £130,000 for allowing salesmen to deliberately squeeze high commission out of investors in exchange for low returns.

But it seems employment by a company involved in this kind of financial misbehaviour is no barrier to being given positions of trust by the government. With the opportunity for making huge profits from the government's stakeholder pensions, the pensions companies must be rubbing their hands in glee.

● *More pensions news, 27*

EXECUTIVES at Marks & Spencer may have been popping the champagne corks too soon after their libel victory over Granada.

For two years Christian Aid and the churches have been campaigning to persuade the top ten supermarkets to adopt an independently monitored code of conduct covering overseas workers. The code would ensure that workers producing products for British supermarkets would have decent working conditions and wages, and that child labour would not be used.

Most supermarkets have agreed to this, but M&S has consistently refused, saying it has high ethical standards and doesn't need independent monitoring. Its defence in the *World in Action* case? "We didn't know it was going on." Er, which is exactly why there are demands for independent monitoring.

Now troubled M&S executives are left wondering how they are going to explain this to their many churchgoing customers.

● *More Legal News, 11*

SO horrified were race relations experts by the early documents sent out at the start of the Stephen Lawrence murder inquiry that they complained of gross official insensitivity.

One result of the complaints was a compulsory full day's course in race awareness for all lawyers and civil servants connected with the inquiry. The courses were carried out by human resources consultant Cecilia Wells OBE, who reported a "marked improvement" in official attitudes after the course.

One welcome change was the dropping of the word "apparently" which invariably appeared in official documents before any reference to a racist attack on Stephen Lawrence.

● *More public inquiries, 12*

OFFICIALS at the department of trade are lobbying for the low pay commission to exclude the welfare-to-work scheme from its planned minimum wage.

This "new deal" for sub-minimum wage temporary jobs has recently found another sponsor — McDonald's. Although the fast food chain claims it is not interested in the subsidy, with its lowest wage being £3.50 an hour the government would pay almost half the costs of anyone taken on under the scheme.

The company also claims it's not interested in the help it will get with recruitment (even though it plans to take on 30,000 new burger flippers by the end of the century). These claims are being made by McDonald's spokesman Mike Love, last seen at the McLibel trial successfully defending the company against the allegation that it doesn't provide nutritious food and harms the environment. He claims the fast food giant is only interested in the welfare-to-work scheme to enhance the company's reputation for social responsibility. Strangely, the government seems less keen to attach the reputation of its flagship scheme to McDonald's and does not include the company on its list of participating national employers.

● *More HP Sauce, 8*

BRITAIN'S most intelligent columnist Richard Littlejohn made a heartfelt plea in the *Sun* on 24 March. STOP THE DI CIRCUS AND LET HER REST IN PEACE **screamed the headline on his lead item on page 11.**

Sun editor Stuart Higgins is obviously right behind his columnist. Page 2 of the same issue announced a "collector's edition of *Sun* Woman" featuring "Poems For A Princess — a special tribute to Diana, Princess of Wales", accompanied by a large photograph of the late saint.

Page 6 also played down Di — er, apart from another big pic and a four-deck headline WHY HOLLYWOOD'S MOST GLITTERING STARS WOULD NOT SHINE FOR DIANA. Pages 7 and 8 did not carry any Di stories at all, so page 10 made up for it with two — FERGIE'S CALL TO DIANA ON TRAGIC NIGHT and BELT UP FOR DI.

The belting-up requested was a reminder to motorists to wear seatbelts, rather than a plea to shut up about Diana.

● *More Street of Shame, 6*

ROBERT Kilroy-Silk's clash with Vanessa Feltz in the battle for the mid-morning chat market has left him with a sorely bruised ego and a big droop in his ratings.

The perma-bronzed presenter is taking the slump so badly he is even threatening to give up TV altogether — and stand for Mayor of London. Those who remember his record as MP for Knowsley have a civic duty to start watching *Kilroy* forthwith to prop up his ratings, if only to save Londoners from a fate worse than Archer.

● *More Media News, 10*

NEW LOOK QUEEN

Street of Shame

DEJA VU

SEASONED *Eye* readers must have blinked when they read the front page headline of the *Sunday Telegraph* on 29 March: REVEALED: HOW THE ARMY SET UP ULSTER MURDERS. **They must have blinked again when they read the first sentence: "A cover unit of British military intelligence colluded with loyalist death squads in Ulster to assassinate members of the Provisional IRA, according to secret files seen by the *Sunday Telegraph*."**

Er, well, it depends what you mean by "revealed". The "secret files" seen by the *Sunday Telegraph* referred to the former British army intelligence agent Brian Nelson, who was sent to spy on the paramilitary Ulster Defence Association and quickly became the UDA's chief of intelligence. In that position, he plotted at least 17 assassinations of leading republicans. The killers, to whom Nelson gave addresses and descriptions of their victims, included Michael Stone, who was imprisoned for bombing the graveyard during the burial of the IRA members killed at Gibraltar, and Billy Wright, recently murdered in the Maze prison.

The story of Nelson's connections with the assassinations came out after his arrest in 1990 and trial in 1992, when he was convicted of five conspiracies to murder and sent to prison for 10 years. Fortunately for the authorities, Nelson pleaded guilty in exchange for a touching tribute in court from an anonymous British army officer.

All this was extensively reported in the *Eye* from the moment Nelson was arrested (see *Eyes* 757, 760, 761, 777, 785, 786, 787, 792, 794, 824, 827, 854). The *Eye* gave the details of Nelson's tortuous negotiations with the inquiry under the then deputy chief constable of Cambridgeshire, John Stevens, known as "son of Stalker"; Nelson's trip to South Africa to procure arms for the paramilitaries and his close relationship with a (still) anonymous government minister.

No one took much notice. The thrust of government policy in Northern Ireland at the time was to support the Protestants at all costs, even including the paramilitaries. This policy had been challenged by the former army information officer and secret black propagandist for British intelligence Colin Wallace, who was summarily sacked (and later compensated), and former military intelligence officer Fred Holroyd, whose queries about the British army's role in assassinations led to his being whisked off to a special army mental hospital and his enforced resignation from the army.

In 1987 Holroyd and Wallace were smeared by intelligence documents leaked to the newly-formed *Independent*. The full-page smear was written by David McKittrick and BBC journalist John Ware. A central claim in their smear was that there was no evidence of any collusion between British army intelligence and the Protestant paramilitaries. The "revelations" in the *Sunday Telegraph*, which rely on yet more leaked intelligence documents, are presented over two pages by three journalists, including, er, John Ware.

An obvious question follows: why does a respectable Tory paper like the *Sunday Telegraph* give such prominence to "revelations" about the connections between the British army and assassinations of suspected republican terrorists which were widely known and rejected by almost all the newspapers in 1991 and 1992? The answer is equally obvious and ominous for Ulster Unionists. The government and at least some of its intelligence services have finally lost patience with the Unionists over the delays in the the peace talks.

Palace will have to keep a careful eye on young Stephen Hughes, who scored both girls in the 2-0 defeat of Chelsea,

The Times

LESSON number one for getting on in the world is to suck up to important people. Edward "Mortarboard" Mortimer, donnish foreign affairs pundit of the *Financial Times*, has certainly learned the wisdom of this.

In the past few years he has written several squirmingly sycophantic pieces about the United Nations in general and its boss Kofi Annan in particular. Last October, for instance, he penned a glowing tribute to Annan's "firmness" and "energy".

Now, lo and behold, "Mortarboard" has been appointed chief speech-writer to... Kofi Annan. The salary in his new job will be at least £120,000 — a big improvement on his £80,000 from the *FT* — and is, of course, tax-free.

WORRIED copytakers at the *Daily Mail* saw their colleagues at the *Daily Telegraph* made redundant in favour of cheap copytakers provided by the Press Association's centralised copytaking service, PA CopyDirect. Then the *Express* copytakers were laid off and replaced by PA copytakers.

CopyDirect soon afterwards advertised for 60 copytakers at the princely salary of £10,000-a-year to work in its office, a converted aircraft hangar near Wetherby, Yorkshire. The panicking *Mail* workers asked for an assurance from management that their jobs were safe. News came back from managing editor Lawrence "Insin" Sear that their fears about job losses were "pure speculation".

Meanwhile reporters and foreign correspondents who had grown to depend on the professionalism of the "telephone reporters" as the *Mail*'s copytakers are quaintly known, were alarmed at the effect this could have on the accuracy of phoned-in stories.

A letter signed by the copytakers went to editor Paul Dacre (salary £650,000-a-year) asking for clarification. Clarification came: that evening couriers were dispatched to the employees' home addresses, some arriving after midnight. The letters informed their recpients that they were being made redundant, effective from the end of July. What's more, if they didn't stay on until July they would lose their redundancy money. Not quite as restful as a cup of Horlicks at bedtime — but typical of the all-heart *Mail* operation.

JOCELYN "Miss" Targett, teenage deputy editor of the *Observer*, has taken another giant step on the path to world domination.

Targett has for some time resented the fact that he is merely a joint deputy editor, alongside ex-*Guardian* hack Paul Webster, and that Webster actually ranks above him in the pecking order, taking charge of the paper when Will "Stakeholder" Hutton is away.

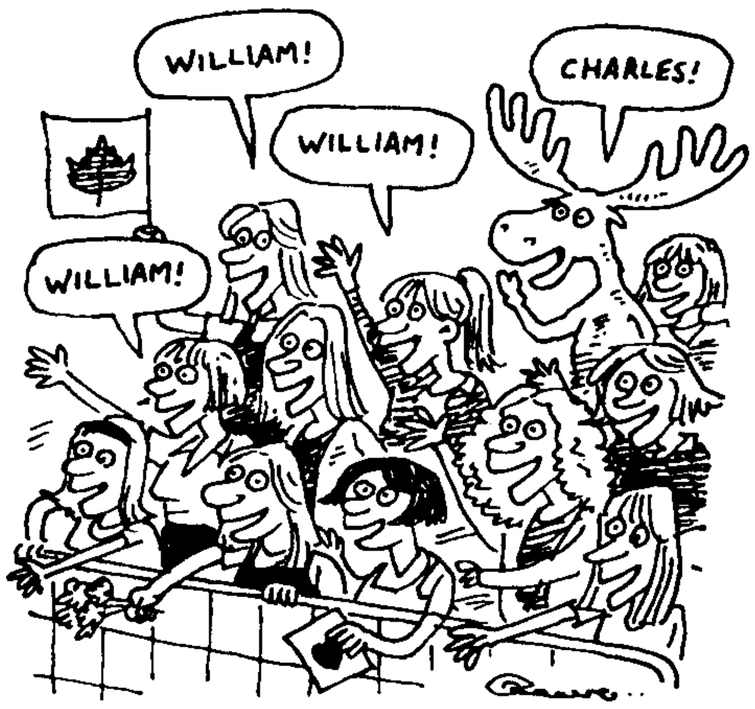
So, when Targett was recently offered a specially-created post at the *Sunday Times* (on a salary not unadjacent to £200,000), he seized the chance to give Hutton an ultimatum: either you get rid of Webster or I shall go to Wapping. Hutton, with uncharacteristic decisiveness, capitulated at once. Webster has been sent back to the *Grauniad* as foreign editor, leaving Targett the sole and unchallenged deputy editor of the *Observer*.

Would the ambitious *Wunderkind* go to such trouble merely to be a second-in-command? Of course not. He revealed his ultimate targett (*sic*) at the *Observer*'s Christmas party last December, when Hutton wondered if he ought to make a speech. "I think you should," Targett advised. "Why don't you say 'I resign and hand over to Jocelyn Targett, and a happy Christmas to you all'?"

Meanwhile the hapless Hutton faces a rebellion from staff over his desire to employ Colin Hughes, erstwhile managing editor of the *Indie*. Many *Observer* hacks — including Nick Cohen, Marie Woolf, Cal McCrystal and Leonard Doyle — only joined the *Obs* in the first place because they had been fired from the *Indie* by "Sacker" Hughes. More awkwardly still, Hughes's ex-wife is the *Observer*'s star interviewer Nicci Gerard — whom he dumped a few years ago, leaving her with two small children, to elope with the lovely Mo Mowlam.

AUSTERE Express Newspapers boss Lord "Alco" Hollick has no time for trivial status symbols — such as *Express* chairman Lord Stevens's company Rolls-Royce. Which is why he has taken it away and had it replaced with a lowly BMW.

Stevens's *amour propre* has been partially saved by Hollick generously allowing him to transfer his personal number plate to the Beamer. But Hollick



himself is not entirely immune to the small vanities of wealth and fame, however. Walking down a corridor at the *Express* the other day he saw the Marquess of Bath and diminutive comedian Ronnie Corbett emerging together from the gents. When Hollick quizzed *Express* editor Richard "Monk" Addis about this bizarre sight he was told that the pair had been guests at a "William Hickey" lunch also attended by such cutting edge figures as Peter Stringfellow, Johnnie Morris and gorgeous, pouting TV newsgirl Anna Ford.

Hollick's face darkened. "Why wasn't *I* invited?" he demanded. Another nail in the Monk's coffin, we fear!

IAN HARRIS, a 16-year-old schoolboy with journalistic ambitions, was delighted last December when he discovered a "Diana Tunnel Racer Game" on the internet. Here, he felt sure, was a scoop that any tabloid would love.

He duly emailed the game's creator, David Linderman, for some quotes and took a day off school to put together a story, hyping it up as much as possible and liberally sprinkling "shocking" and "sick" across the copy.

He then faxed it to the *Mirror* and rang to ask if they were interested. "I wouldn't have thought so," a newsdesk wallah muttered. This week, however, the *Mirror* ran a huge "exclusive" headed FURY AS DIANA CAR CHASE GAME GOES ON INTERNET, liberally sprinkled with adjectives such as "sickening" and "disgusting", plus quotes from David Linderman.

The only thing missing was any byline for Ian Harris, the enterprising teenage hack who had delivered the "exclusive" a mere three months earlier.

ON 15 March the *Sunday Times* filled almost an entire page with a sensationally important news story. "After centuries of rivalry," it revealed, "Winchester College has overtaken Eton and Harrow in the battle for the title of Britain's top-performing private boarding school."

The prominence given to this extended puff-piece — full of praise for the school's "highly academic approach and desire to encourage original thinking" — may seem slightly excessive, given how few *Sunday Times* readers send their children to Winchester, which has just 650 pupils and charges £14,500 a year.

But it no doubt made pleasant reading for *ST* editor John Witherow, whose son, by an extraordinary coincidence, starts at Winchester next year.

LUVVIES

"I wanted to experience what it was like to be in Van Gogh's head or to be Don Juan. I wanted to experience what it's like to go completely mad. All of those things are in us if you allow yourself to go there. But you're messing about with the emotional, psychological being and it can start to bleed into your own life. It's a dangerous thing to do."

LINUS ROACHE
Times

Submitted by Francis Harvey.

An occasional column devoted to gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

STUNG by the *Eye*'s revelations about the *Daily Telegraph* crossword editor who has replaced her regular compilers with a computer program, the *Torygraph* hastened to reassure readers by running a "news" story which claimed that the change would "breathe new life into the country's most popular cryptic crossword".

The puzzles would "becon esher every day, with an ever-increasing proportion of new clues and solutions", the paper reported — promptly contradicting itself by insisting that "many — perhaps most — solvers will notice no difference".

The crossword editor, Val Gilbert, denied that the new system was being introduced to save money: "That is not the name of the game. The new way will probably cost more money." How odd, then, that in February the same Val Gilbert told her compilers she was effectively sacking them and turning to computer-generated puzzles "because of the cost savings involved".

IPC magazines' annual awards ceremony is a chance for the magazine folk to meet colleagues from other floors of the company's impersonal office building, King's Reach Tower, near Blackfriars Bridge.

But the opportunity for networking fell flat this year when *Horse & Hound* staff took to the stage to collect a prize and those IPC workers hostile to field sports began booing and hissing them. Elizabeth Peplow, of *Horse & Hound*, said the night was more "like a night out with the British National Party" than a celebration of journalistic achievement.

IPC chief executive Mike Matthew later sent a reproachful e-mail telling staff that "heckling and disturbances we heard when the 'country' titles were featured was entirely inappropriate"... "IPC magazines, all of them, should be viewed as a Family and we should all exert maximum TOLERANCE of family members and TRY HARD to avoid conflict".

"It's time you went"

LOOKALIKE

FANS of Leonardo DiCaprio have been struck by the amazing resemblance between the following newspaper items:

"Men and some women squabble over whether he [Leonardo DiCaprio] is good looking enough to deserve all this attention. It is true that he can look, in some lights, like a young Norman Lamont..."

— Sarah Sands, *Daily Telegraph*, Saturday 21 March.

"MPs are remarking on the uncanny likeness between heart-throb Leonardo DiCaprio, of *Titanic*-mania fame, and — are you ready for this? — the young Norman Lamont."

— Eben Black, *News of the World*, 22 March.

"Mr DiCaprio... is a dead ringer for the young Norman Lamont."

— Peter McKay, *Daily Mail*, 23 March.

Are they by any chance related?

THE *Daily Telegraph*'s sub-editors were clearly having a private laugh when they laid out the front page for Monday 30 March.

The lead story, GOVERNMENT PLAN TO GIVE MARRIAGE GUIDANCE, explained how the government was considering marriage preparation classes because more than 167,000 couples divorce each year. Adjacent to this tale of government morality over marriage was a story headlined COOK SETS DATE FOR WEDDING about foreign secretary Robin Cook, who, after the "breakdown of his marriage" is to marry "his fiancée and secretary Gaynor Regan".

MR Ronald Spark of East Sussex writes to the *Spectator* about the relative merits of the *Mail* and *Express* newspapers. "The *Sunday Express* suffered," he grumbles, "because it had the misfortune to be run for two decades by John Junor, whose clock stopped around 1956."

Surely this cannot be the same Ronald Spark who was sacked from the *Sunday Express* by, er, John Junor for faking his expenses? *Spectator* readers do not know; but we think they should be told.

HACKWATCH

NEW MONEY, OLD ROPE

DOZENS of press awards are dished out at this time of year — enough to allow almost every Fleet Street rag to claim, quite accurately, that it has been named "Newspaper of the Year".

Sadly, however, there is no prize for the real heroes of the trade — those personal-finance editors who try to enliven their dreary pieces about PEPs and ISAs by bunging in an eye-catching photo or a celebrity tie-in, even if it has little or no relevance to the subject of the article.

Here's a provisional shortlist:

4 February: Page-three lovely Jo Guest appears in the *Express*'s money pages, wearing high heels and a basque. "I have a five-year fixed-rate mortgage," she purrs seductively, "but I'm not sure whether I should pay it off or put my money into longer-term investments."

7 February: Bank customers can now trace forgotten accounts more easily, reports the *Times*. Or, as the caption puts it, "Fast asleep: but long-dormant accounts can be tracked down." Illustrated, naturally, by a big-haired beauty asleep in a skimpy *negligé*. The paper also ponders the future of building societies, offering readers a delightful close-up of Ute Lemper's long, fishnet-clad legs. Why? The caption explains all: "Societies could use a high kick like Ute Lemper's in *Chicago*."

8 February: The *Sunday Times* Money section compares the tax position of married and unmarried couples, helpfully printing a huge picture of gorgeous pouting Liz Hurley and her boyfriend Hugh Grant.

11 February: A *Daily Mail* article on Venture Capital Trusts is accompanied by a photo of Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones (caption: "Courage: will you risk a VCT?"), while one on new companies offering credit cards has Tom Hanks as Forrest Gump ("Clueless: many people struggle to get to grips with the new players").

1 March: The *Sunday Telegraph* looks at the ever-fascinating subject of personal equity plans, with a photo of a climber ascending a rockface. "Guaranteed Peps," it reports, "ensure your investment will not fall."

4 March: "Tax Change Fears Trigger Rush to Top Up Pensions", an *Express* headline warns. A picture of the lovely Vogue (from *Gladiators*) fills much of the page, and squeezed in beneath her lycra-clad form is a shot of Liam and Noel Gallagher. These celebs, the *Express* notes, "are among those who have taken out pension plans".

7 March: On the back page of the *Times*'s Weekend Money supplement, a bronzed, blonde, bikini-clad woman is shown diving into the sea. ("Holiday insurance is vital if you engage in dangerous sports.") Elsewhere, there is a feature about split-capital trusts — illustrated, mystifyingly, by a photo of two ballet dancers, legs akimbo. "Going for the splits can often be painful," the caption explains, "but the results are usually worthwhile."

8 March: In the *Sunday Times*'s Money section a survey of overseas investment portfolios is illustrated by the leaning tower of Pisa — because "European savers are now *leaning* more towards equities". Not to be outdone, the *Observer*'s "investment strategy special feature" has a droolsome photo of semi-naked men with washboard stomachs and rippling pecs. "For a full picture, check out the vital statistics," the paper advises. "Don't make choices based on appearance alone."

11 March: A *Daily Mail* feature on tax rebates shows "*Coronation Street* stalwart Betty Turpin", who, like other part-time workers, "could claim back tax wrongly paid on building society and bank savings". Meanwhile, the extra insurance costs faced by smokers are examined alongside the familiar face of TV's Dot Cotton, who, we are told, "could pay more" — were she not, like Betty Turpin, a fictional character.

14 March: In the *Times*'s Weekend Money section, Gavin Lumsden also reports on smokers' insurance premiums. To elucidate his complicated discussion of annuities and endowments, he has something even more glamorous than TV's Dot Cotton — an old studio-shot of Lauren Bacall, cigarette dangling from her lips. A few pages earlier, below a picture of "TV's Beatie Edney and Holly Aird", we learn that many people under the age of 35 may have been victims of the personal pensions scandal. Were Beatie and Holly victims, then? No, but they are in their thirties.

15 March: "Help On Hand at Last for Younger Pension Victims," Nick Gardner reports in the *Sunday Times* Money pages. Instead of Beatie Edney and Holly Aird, we are treated to a charming photo of one Kiershen Mackenzie, a young woman from London who "had no idea that she had been mis-sold a pension until the *Sunday Times* alerted her". How clever of the *Sunday Times* to track her down, eh? Nick Gardner forgets to add that the delightful Kiershen Mackenzie, daughter of the more famous Kelvin, is in fact a staff hackette on the *Sunday Times* — and, er, the girlfriend of Nick Gardner.

18 March: Who gains from the budget? The *Times* once more digs out its well-loved picture of TV's Beatie Edney and Holly Aird. "Louise, the blonde half of Channel Four's *Dressing For Breakfast*, will not notice much change to her way of life," it reports. Over at *EastEnders*, Ian Beale "will have welcomed the 1 percent cut in capital gains tax for small businesses", but may now be liable for "the mooted tax on child benefit". Dr Shearer of *Peak Practice* is safe from any removal of mortgage tax relief, while Fiona Middleton, the hairdresser in *Coronation Street*, "may also be heartened that the new childcare tax credit — for those who earn up to £14,000 a year — will cover as much as 70 percent of those costs up to £100 a week for a first child". Or, then again, she may not: since she doesn't exist, who can tell?

Over at the more sober *Daily Mail*, the effects of the budget on imaginary characters are ignored. Instead, the paper focuses on one Bridget Cleverly. "Miss Cleverly, 36, a higher-rate taxpayer who lives by herself in the South-East, has been pouring her spare cash into tax-free PEPs ever since they were launched in 1987." She is "delighted" that Gordon Brown decided not to "penalise long-term savers". And no wonder: though the *Mail* neglects to mention it, Ms Cleverly is in fact the marketing director of Schroder Investment Management — one of the major PEP providers.

21 March: The *Daily Telegraph*'s personal finance section, Money-Go-Round, examines the Budget. And so, of course, it carries two photos of the Spice Girls — partly to illustrate the chancellor's abolition of the foreign earnings deduction (affecting people who "frequently travel to work abroad"), and partly because the budget was... a mixture of "sugar and spice". Geddit!?!

"Gun control? Over my dead body..."

IN THE TEAROOM

BELIEVE it or not there are still a handful of Labour backbenchers who act independently of the Number Ten command bunker. For two of them, the moment of destiny has arrived.

Until 2 May last year Rhodri Morgan had, not unreasonably, nursed hopes of becoming a minister at the Welsh office. Through long years of opposition he had harried the frontbench, exposing Tory cronyism in quango appointments. He was a spry performer in the House and a master of detail. But to the "new" Labour puritans Rhodri was a clown. Worse still, he was a lunching clown, a gossiping clown, and therefore thoroughly unsuitable.

As a consolation — and to keep him out of trouble — Morgan was handed chairmanship of the obscure public administration committee. And it is in this role that he has now summoned the PM's press secretary, Alastair Campbell, ostensibly to explain the "reforms" he has made in the running of the government information service. The questions, however, will range far wider than that.

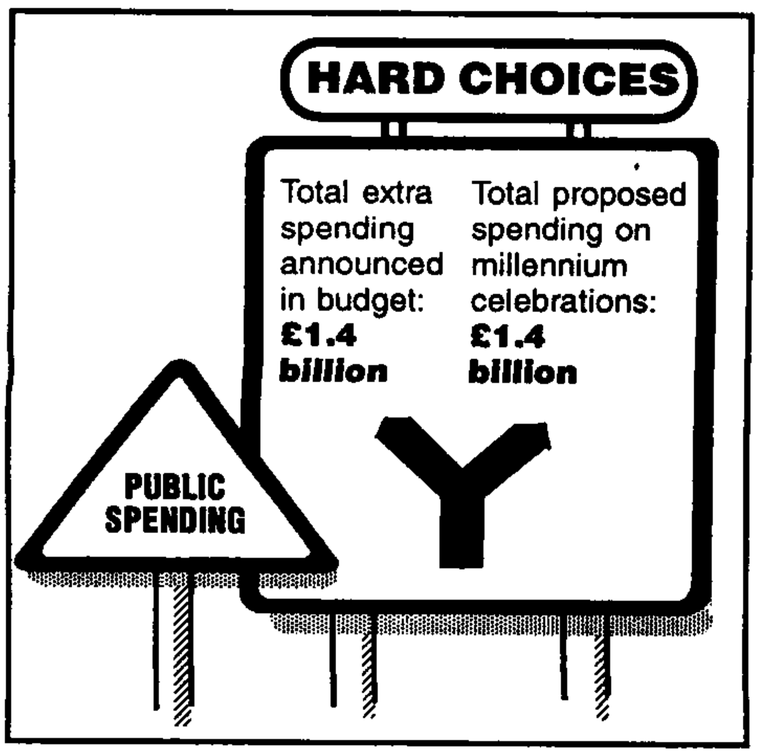
The committee wants to examine the whole control freak culture of the Number Ten press office. Why is Campbell empowered to write rude and imperious notes to senior ministers like Harriet Harman? Did he tell porkie pies about that Blair phone call to Romano Prodi? What precisely is the PM's deal with Rupert Murdoch? All sensitive stuff.

Morgan is too smart a politician to give Campbell a high-temperature roasting, but the prospect of gently kebabing him for an hour or two offers Rhodri the kind of satisfaction that simply sitting on the government side of the House cannot. Campbell, though, is a robust fellow and is hardly quaking in his boots. In fact he has a wheeze to turn the encounter to his advantage.

For some time Campbell has wanted to get a grip on treasury mouthpiece Charlie Whelan, whose independence has been agreed in blood as part of the Blair-Brown peace treaty. But a slyly planted question about mendacity... the importance of trust to the financial markets, etc, would allow Campbell to hint, in the most delicate way, that if the committee felt it best that Whelan should report to him... then Blair would give the matter serious thought.

Meanwhile it is decision time for Clive Soley. Instead of being made housing minister last May, Soley has had to make do with chairmanship of the parliamentary Labour party. Blair wants to kill the amendment to the competition bill that would prohibit Rupert Murdoch's predatory pricing of the *Times*. A large number of backbenchers want to give the Dirty Digger a bloody nose and are looking to Soley to argue their case. For once in his life Soley just might make a difference... Alternatively both he and Morgan could be nobbled. Come to think of it, that's much more likely.

'Urquhart'


HARD CHOICES
Total extra spending announced in budget: £1.4 billion
Total proposed spending on millennium celebrations: £1.4 billion
PUBLIC SPENDING

TONY BLAIR is fast discovering that all that is American does not necessarily work when transported across the Atlantic.

Having borrowed from the US the idea of having a directly elected London mayor (which would be a handy way of bypassing the troublesome London Labour party and its standard bearer, Red Ken Livingstone), Blair began casting around for candidates — any candidate — capable of seeing off a Livingstone challenge.

An early favourite was Michael Cassidy, former chairman of the Corporation of London's policy and resources committee. An effective lobbyist for the City's arcane practice of allowing businessmen to elect its councillors, Cassidy is credited with having persuaded Blair to drop Labour's commitment to abolish the medieval corporation in favour of a commitment to, er, maintain the corporation's rotten borough practices and even try them out elsewhere.

Since Cassidy was an unknown, the spin doctors then hit upon grinning beardie Richard Branson as a possibility. But once Beardie became aware that his candidature would entail divesting himself of his Virgin empire, the ageing hippy and failed balloonist confided that he would not be allowing his name to go forward.

Next in the frame was LWT presenter and old friend of Peter "Mandy" Mandelson, Trevor Phillips. The problem with Phillips remains that no one apart from Phillips and Mandy thinks he stands an earthly. And then there was the fiercely loyal Glenda Jackson, the brittle "new" Labour MP for Hampstead & Highgate and former nymphette of the silver screen. Sadly, her grim countenance has not done her any favours. Likewise Barking's fiercely ambitious Margaret "Enver" Hodge, whose poor record as leader of Islington council would have featured strongly in the London *Evening Standard*.

So now the masterplan... step forward genial Frank Dobson, Tony Blair's last best hope of halting Red Ken in his tracks. But does health secretary Dobbo really want to do it? As a shadow local government spokesman he fought a rearguard action against Blair's plans for a directly elected mayor — and lost. He is also quite enjoying himself at health. So unless Dobbo can be persuaded, the London Labour party will plump for Livingstone — if he is allowed on the candidates' list, that is. Thus a nightmare scenario now beckons for both Blair and William Hague: Leninspart v. "Lord" Archer.

ONCE the golden girl of "new" Labour and star of many a soft focus party political broadcast, Harriet Harman now faces the chop in Tony Blair's much heralded first reshuffle.

Her crime? To advance unpopular Blairite policies, such as cutting single parent benefits, while also appearing to believe in them. Her mistake? To make a complete hash of explaining said policies each and every time she stood up in parliament or appeared on the *Today* programme, the *Nine O'Clock News*, *Women's Hour*, etc, etc. Her other mistake? Not to have any other friends aside from Peter, Gordon, Tony — and the still loyal Patricia Hewitt from halcyon NCCL days.

But it wasn't always this way for Labour's answer to Laura Ashley. Once upon a time Harman could indeed count upon good friends such as Peter, Gordon and Tony. Although in more recent years she had been closer to Gordon — hence earning herself a first black mark. Her second black mark was delivered after it was revealed that her children were being sent — well away from Harman's dirt poor Camberwell & Peckham manor — to grant maintained schools. Even though she was only loyally following the example of her leader, Blair believed that Harpie had shown insufficient gratitude for the defence operation mounted on her behalf.

Her third black mark followed a budget leak detailing a proposed U-turn on single parent benefits to old Harpie camp follower and *Guardian* hack Polly Toynbee. Much fury surrounded this particular leak, as opposed to any of the others. But la Toynbee denied that Harpie was responsible for any panicky late night telephone calls — in which case the treasury spin doctors dropped her in it.

ALTRUISTIC Gerry Robinson may have taken on the chair of the Arts Council, but his company, Granada, is trying to gobble up more public catering contracts than ever before.

The company is forming separate units to chase education, health care and public bodies for work;

"It seems to be saying 'Get on yer bike'..."

and so far the strategy looks successful. Granada won the privatised catering element of the South Buckinghamshire NHS trust PFI scheme in the same month that Robinson agreed to take on the Arts Council job. Granada is now in line for another, much larger catering privatisation. Industry sources think it will gain a 49 percent stake in post office caterer Quadrant.

In chasing public work, however, Robinson has become linked with one of Britain's longest-running industrial disputes. For Granada has bought service company Pall Mall Services Group, which is well established in public sector contracting-out deals. In October 1995 53 women working for Pall Mall in Hillingdon Hospital refused a pay cut of 20 percent from £109 a week to £84 a week. They went on strike and were sacked. Half of them are still fighting the group now and their cases have been referred to an industrial tribunal in May.

If Robinson wants to show his support for Labour is based on a belief in fairness, perhaps he should settle the dispute.

GERRY ROBINSON, the head of Granada, is not the only one at the company with the government's ear. Stephanie Monk, head of human resources at the firm, sits on the government's low pay unit.

Interestingly, Granada confidently refused to increase pay at its Little Chef and Travelodge businesses at the last review (August 1997). And the "Gold Rate" for hard-working catering assistants, which they usually achieve after three months' work, remains £3.55 an hour. This figure has not changed since 1995. Anyone looking for clues about the final rate of the minimum wage need look no further.

SO foreign office minister Derek Fatchett has been officially labelled Britain's "ambassador of cool" and put in charge of a 30-strong team of civil servants, businessmen and luvvies to sell "Cool Britannia" to the world. But Del-boy has not always been so cool.

In February, when it looked like Britain and the US were about to bomb Iraq, one of his constituency surgeries in Leeds was the scene of an anti-war protest. During a robust exchange of views, Derek Fatchett had water thrown over him.

At the next meeting of his Leeds Central constituency Labour party, an appeal was made for party members to attend the MP's next surgery to give him "protection". This pathetic plea fell on deaf ears when it was pointed out that, if special branch and MI5 couldn't protect a foreign office minister, what hope would a few ageing Labour party hacks have?

Following Fatchett's appointment as ambassador for cool, unkind souls in Leeds now claim he threw the water over himself in a desperate attempt to gain Chumbawumba-style street cred in line with his new image.

TERRIFIED by his failure by a wide margin to fulfil his commitment to cut hospital waiting lists, Frank Dobson, health secretary, has resorted to desperate measures.

All the chairmen and women and chief executives of hospital trusts from England and Wales were summoned to travel (first class, naturally) to London in the week starting 29 March to get a dressing down from health ministers.

Tessa Jowell kicked off on the Monday by speaking sternly to the assembled health chiefs from the north-west. Little time has been allowed for any of the executives to answer back, but some plan to argue that the huge sums lobbed out to the trusts are a waste of money and could be spent on much more urgent priorities.

A TICKLISH problem for Welsh secretary Ron Davies, who after discounting Cardiff's newly refurbished City Hall as a site for the Welsh assembly, has two choices: Bute Square in the city's old red-light district or Crickhowell House (*Eyes passim*).

The problem with the latter was best summed up by Rhodri Morgan MP, who is tipped for a prominent position in the assembly. He told the House of Commons that Crickhowell House "is the very embodiment of Tory sleaze and that corruption-ridden semi-colonial past... Tory secretary of state, David — now Lord — Hunt signed the lease with the company of his predecessor Tory secretary of state Nicholas Edwards — now Lord Crickhowell — and a building that cost Associated British Ports, Lord Crickhowell's company, £11m suddenly became worth £22m, representing 100 percent profit overnight to two Tory secretaries of state."

Despite these events, much criticised by the then shadow Welsh secretary Ron Davies, there is an argument that might make him opt for Crickhowell House: the empty building is currently costing the Welsh office £1,005,000 a year.

Morgan is unlikely to feel sorry for the Welsh secretary and his dilemma: he was a frontbench shadow Welsh minister until May 1997 when the "new" Labour government swept him aside in favour of the colourless Peter Hain MP.

"There's an awful lot of coughing in Brazil"

DISILLUSIONMENT with "new" Labour boiled over when activist Bob Thomson launched an attack on party spin doctors, saying that they are "in danger of spinning us out of power for our new Scottish parliament".

And how did the Scottish spin doctors respond? Initial reports on *Reporting Scotland* had an unnamed party spokesman describing Thomson as "an extremist on the fringes of the party". Later reports featured a more measured response to Thomson's attack. Perhaps someone had reminded the kings of spin that the "extremist" in question also happens to be treasurer of the Scottish Labour party.

IT'S official: Gordon Brown really is a pain in the arse. Inland Revenue press release number 32, explaining details of the chancellor's budget, explains that Brown has put a stop to the loophole whereby fat cat executives avoid paying tax on bonuses by receiving them in kind.

"Such payments have involved payments in gold bars, bismuth, hay, trade debts and reversionary interests in offshore trusts," it explains. Fair enough — but what, pray, is bismuth? "A crystalline metallic element widely used in alloys... and medicines," says the dictionary. The BMA's *New Guide to Medicines and Drugs* is more forthcoming: bismuth is one of the principal ingredients of ointments for treating piles and anal itching. Is there no end to the cruelty of this man?

'Backbiter'

NOOKS and CRANNIES

BRITAIN may no longer know how to build a railway, but we still know how to demolish buildings. Plans by London & Continental to build a new high-speed line from the Channel tunnel to St Pancras are now up in the air, leaving the proposal to revamp the Midland Grand Hotel and enlarge and muck about with the great train shed in disarray. But the threat to surrounding buildings and industrial structures remains.

It has been well documented how English Heritage surrendered its statutory role in protecting listed and other historic buildings in the King's Cross area under the extraordinary powers given to London & Continental by the Channel tunnel rail link act of 1996.

Some of course may not find Victorian cast-iron gasholders and railway train sheds to their taste, but film-makers love the remarkable landscape behind King's Cross and St Pancras stations. Sir Jocelyn Stevens, chairman of English Heritage, recently credited the revival of the British film industry with generating a tourist boom at its historic properties. And it is true that from *The Ladykillers* on, a remarkable number of films have used the streets and buildings around the great Victorian stations. Last year at least 23 films or television programmes were shot in Cheney Road. Yet under the still active London & Continental plans, Cheney Road disappears — as does the front half of the German Gymnasium, as do the gasholders.

This is not idle scaremongering. In its position statement on King's Cross, English Heritage supported the listing of, among other things, the Maiden Lane bridge in York Way, which is now being rebuilt. The document also noted that, along with other buildings, "the Weller's Court warehouses are significant ancillaries to the major monuments, and make a vital contribution to the Victorian townscape which is an important part of the character of the area. English Heritage expects every effort to be made to ensure that these buildings are retained and incorporated into the future development of the site..." Well, tenants in Weller's Court have been told the building is coming down as it is a dangerous structure. It is owned by London & Continental.

Even if the rail link never gets to St Pancras, of course, this remains a valuable development site. Attempts are now being made to salvage something from the debacle over building a vital strategic railway across Kent: perhaps it will be built as far as Ebbsfleet, perhaps even to Stratford. Unfortunately, under the CTRL act, it is all or nothing. So if anything is to be done, all the powers must remain live. This means that a most remarkable industrial and urban landscape can still be destroyed even though the sacrifice of the buildings is not and may never be necessary. So much for conservation and commonsense.

AT LEAST some stories have a happy ending. In Eye 939 I described the threat to the Mansfield Place Church in Edinburgh, with its murals by Phoebe Traquair.

The owner of the building, the so-called Edinburgh Brick Company, declined to accept the offer of £250,000 from the Mansfield Traquair Trust out of sheer bloody-mindedness. But recently it was happy to sell it for £28,000 to two property developers who run Edinburgh pubs and who said they would make the church into a bridge club. Instead, however, they immediately sold it on to the trust for £301,000, so restoration can begin. The Edinburgh Brick Company, alias the Gibbons family, is less than delighted. Good. But sad that only by such subterfuge could one of Edinburgh's monuments be saved.

Elsewhere, there is no underestimating the malice sometimes displayed by those who seem happy to abuse historic buildings and would rather see them destroyed than sell them to others. Over in Glasgow, Egyptian Halls, the finest commercial building by Alexander "Greek" Thomson, rotted for years in the care of a Hong Kong restaurateur. At last, in the nick of time for the building's survival, the city council compulsorily purchased it. But earlier this month, just before the long overdue restoration was about to begin, the former owner mounted a legal challenge to the CPO supported by John Dyer, a developer from Dundee recently struck off by the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Work has been suspended; and even though the Hong Kong player does not have a case, the legal wrangling could go on for years, by which time this extraordinary building will have been condemned by Glasgow's ever zealous building control officers. So what will the Arts Council's City of Architecture and Design in 1999 do to save one of its greatest architectural assets?

'Piloti'

WATERWORLD

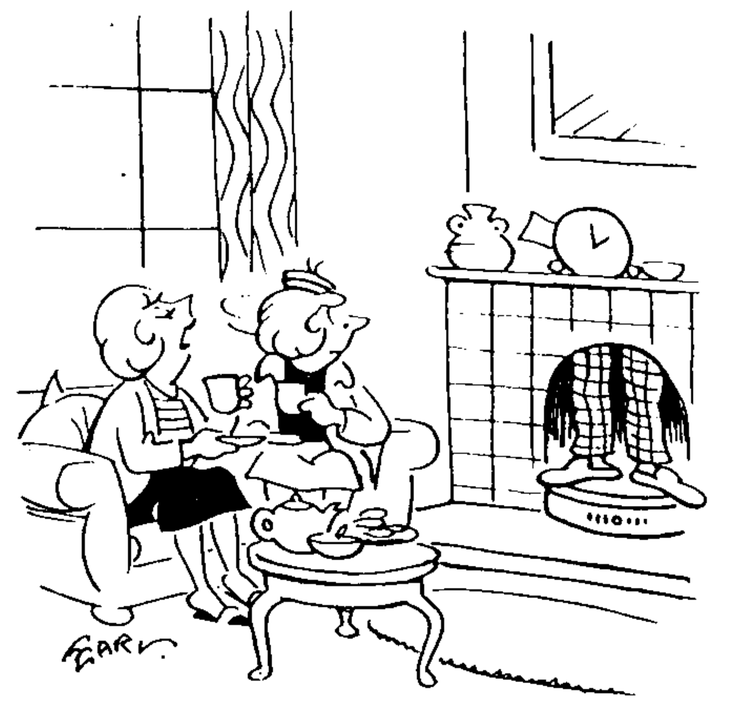
HYDER WATER's engineering arm, Hyder Consulting, had cheering news for its staff toiling for the privatised water company in Dubai.

The new head of Hyder Consulting announced that the company run by "new" Labour's favourite businessman Graham Hawker, (who is advising the government on its welfare-to-work programme) wants to centralise its design into several large offices. One of these will be in Pakistan where engineers can be hired very cheaply. The move will inevitably mean even more redundancies in Wales where Hawker's reforms have already meant more than 1,000 workers have lost their jobs.

● OVER at **Thames Water**, a message of cheer was sent to customers served by the Nettlebed reservoir. Phase one of a project to secure supplies to the area was complete, they were assured. "Phase 2 of the scheme," wrote Barbara Lacey, customer care agent, "is to install 3.5 kilometres of paperwork from Highmoor Cross to Nettlebed Reservoir". Presumably the pipework will follow later.

● MEANWHILE customers of disaster prone **Yorkshire Water** can sleep easy in the knowledge that the company's part-time chairman Brandon Gough is to spend even less time looking after their interests. From this month Mr Gough is to take on extra duties in one of his other jobs, as chairman of bank note firm De La Rue. He will hold the reins until a successor is found for De La Rue chief executive Jeremy Marshall, who is retiring.

Gough, who lives in Kent, currently spends just one day a week in Leeds working for Yorkshire Water and another day working for the company in London. For this he is paid £120,000 a year plus bonuses. He clearly knows a thing or two about licences to print money...



"Sidney still enjoys the occasional cigarette"

ETV

National Lottery Big Ticket (BBC1)

EVEN though *Casualty* has finished its current run, last Saturday night on BBC1 was still all about emergency resuscitations. The relaunched National Lottery draw programme features three declining TV institutions desperately in need of a revival.

The first is the great British bingo itself, which has recently experienced declining ticket sales, collapsing telly ratings, the embarrassing libel case in which Richard Branson successfully sued one of the Lottery-operating companies, G-Tech, and the spectacle of a literal balls-up on Saturday night when a draw had to be rerun after the programme and Camelot had to pay out twice.

The second institution is Anthea Turner, who became a telly celebrity when hosting the original *National Lottery Live* show. Foolishly, Anthea somehow convinced herself that the 17 million tuning in back then were watching because of her rather than because of the possibility of winning eight million quid.

She gave up the day-job (GMTV) and launched herself on a big-money ITV contract as a star presenter. As pilot after pilot failed to take off, Anthea also lost her main professional assets — girlish innocence and harmless vacuousness — when she left her manager-husband to shag her best friend's man. Make no mistake: agreeing to return to host the lottery is a desperate attempt at career retrenchment.

Her co-host for the new show — Irish stand-up Patrick Kielty — is also in need of lift-off. Hyped a couple of years ago as the Next Big Thing, he has presided over a disastrous BBC1 series about wacky ads and a terrible Channel 4 game show which, strangely, was a parody of the lottery programme. He is one of the few TV talents to have had the critical backlash without a previous period of success.

Unfortunately for lottery, Anthea and Patrick, their intended relaunch vehicle — *National Lottery Big Ticket*, a show expanded from 15 to almost 60 minutes — ran into difficulties right from the start. Westminster cultural watchdog Gerald Kaufman complained that the relaunch broke the BBC's charter. Part of the programme was a new supplementary draw — Home Play — which could be played only by those viewing the BBC programme and which was lavishly advertised by the draw operators Camelot.

But let's forget for the moment whether it's legally and morally defensible. Let's start with the artistic. *Big Ticket* wants to be *It's A Knockout!* but hasn't got the cash or the imagination and so comes out as sports day at a school for the educationally subnormal. Wearing red, yellow, blue or green sweatshirts, four teams of charity workers and glamorous actresses (Patsy Palmer from *EastEnders*, Samantha Janus from *Game On*) take part in silly contests.

For example, there's a Car Wash

"Aargh! I've turned 30 and I haven't got a camera crew..."

Game in which the actresses are strapped into imitation racing cars and fired along a track. Their companion chooses route A or B. One track will earn them a drenching!

Perhaps to distance the BBC from commercial activity, the Home Play draw segments are hosted by a virtual presenter called Bernie, a computerised beauty with huge breasts, a northern accent and a supply of vacuous patter. The show's main attraction is the tangible grumpiness from Anthea when Bernie hands back to her. You can see why because the virtual hostess totally out-classes her.

Anthea and Patrick keep stressing how much money the lottery raises for good causes but, on that basis, you'd start giving WI jumble sales an hour of BBC peak-time. But, whether or not the new show manages to bring lottery's, Anthea's and Patrick's careers back to life, it may prove a near-terminal blow to the reputation of the BBC.

Defenders of broadcasting standards have always been uneasy about the BBC's involvement with the lottery, a fundamentally vulgar enterprise and one which (as the GTech libel case confirmed) made the corporation tacit collaborators with the kind of commercial interests which would normally attract the BBC's interest as subjects for investigation by its current affairs shows.

Even so, the original lottery show — shorter than an average programme and not featured in any of Camelot's advertising — was just about defensible on the grounds that the BBC was essentially reporting a result, rather as it might screen a sporting contest. Even purists must admit that the main lottery draw existed as a concept before there was any agreement on behalf of television to cover it.

None of these excuses, though, apply to *National Lottery Big Ticket*. Occupying almost an hour of the Saturday night schedule — and with a new game constructed and advertised specifically for the television relaunch — it is hard to see how the new programme does not break both the spirit and the letter of every BBC rule relating to advertising and commercial ventures. It simultaneously cheapens the BBC1 schedule while enriching Camelot.

Gerald Kaufman may be something of a grandstanding snob on cultural matters, but he's right to intervene on behalf of the viewers in this matter. When it comes to *National Lottery Big Ticket*, Anthea Turner isn't the only one connected with the venture who's being screwed like they've never been screwed before.

'Square Eyes'

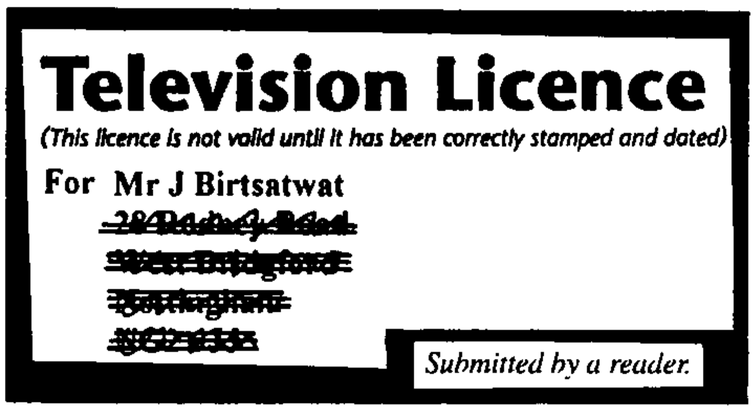
MEDIA NEWS

HEAD of BBC Resources "Bonking" Rod Lynch, together with his newly engorged PR team, has been touring the regions to deliver his latest glossy "presentation" about the delayed incorporation of BBC Resources into two new enterprises — BBC Resources Ltd and Production Services.

BBC staffers forced to attend the events were reminded that from 1 July their BBC equipment, studios, facilities and staff will be hired out to paying external customers by Resources Ltd — even to those programme-makers in fierce competition with the BBC's own output.

Thanks to the investment of £150m of the BBC's own equipment in the new scheme, Lynch is confident that technical quality will be high — so high that "our resourcing external programming could mean ITV shows having better production values than BBC output". And what will all this mean for BBC producers as they watch their ratings plummet? "It will just remind BBC Production what they're missing," enthused Lynch.

Of course BBC producers "will remain BBC Resources Ltd's principal customer", but since "some external work can pay considerably better than BBC work" they may not always be able to book what they're missing when they need to.


Television Licence
(This licence is not valid until it has been correctly stamped and dated)
For Mr J Birtsatwat
Submitted by a reader.

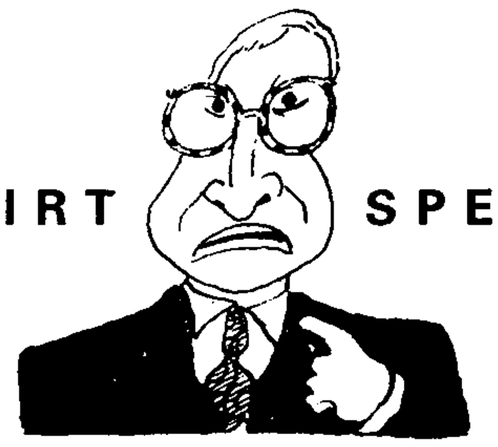
RADIO 4 controller James Boyle is taking steps to ensure there will be no dissent on air prior to the station's new schedules coming into force next week.

He does not want any emotional farewells such as that from DJ Simon Bates when Matthew Bannister took his axe to Radio 1's old farts a couple of years ago — and certainly not any outright disrespect of the Chris Evans variety (he called Bannister "the Fat Controller" on air after being ticked off for being late).

Radio 4's Birtist "Network Manager" Caroline Elliott has therefore sent a memo to all producers and presenters of shows about to be axed, such as *Mediumwave, Sport on 4, Kaleidoscope* and *Medicine Now*. Headed "Don't Say Goodbye on Radio 4", it decrees there must be no "end-of-series parties on air, no lists of credits for producers and presenters over the years, no highlights from series past and no 'it's goodbye from...' "

Meanwhile Boyle has approved a stunning new logo for Radio 4, dreamed up by the BBC's marketing department and presented to staff at a cost of thousands of licence-payers' pounds. It consists of, er, a lightbulb. Radio 4 is all about speech, you see, so publicity material will in future put titles of programmes in quotation marks. These will be in the form of *little yellow lightbulbs* to indicate that Radio 4 is very, er, bright. Brilliant!

BIRT SPEAK



HACKS at Broadcasting House have received important instructions on how to ensure their memos conform to the Beeb's new corporate culture.

"BBC stationery whether used externally or internally is a principal expression of our brand," explains Head of Brand Design Tony Key in a seven-page document. "Even small variations in the way of personalisation will undermine the clarity of our new identity."

A crystal clear list of the authorised letterheads follows, including his new BBC corporate fax header, corporate memo header, Directorate fax header, Directorate memo header, as well as letterheads for BBC Broadcast, News, Production, Resources, Worldwide, World Service, and another list of memo-headers for all the above.

Confused staff are instructed to contact any of the "other publications within the suite of identity standards: BBC Logo and Artwork, On Screen Presentation, On Screen Production & End Credit Guidelines, Stationery, Forms, Recruitment Advertising, Presentations, Exhibitions, Receptions, Vehicles, Literature and Publications, Product Merchandising & Licensing, or Legal & Policy Issues."

UNDETERRED by the abuse heaped on the new BBC noticeboards or "family of information systems" currently plaguing Broadcasting House, work continues unabated. Interrupting a radio interview to investigate the source of some loud banging noises, one hack found a workman nailing a new-style sign next to a lift. It read "Lift".

THERE were trebles all round at ITN when its £18m contract with *Channel 4 News* was renewed, but word is only now emerging of the deal that was cut to keep the business.

Channel 4's head of news David Lloyd had been rattled by the success of Kirsty Young and *Channel 5 News*, so decided to rattle his ITN incumbents. He circulated a "pre-tender" document inviting production companies to pitch a "vision of evolution" in which "the news world is your oyster".

This sent ITN management into a spin. While independent rival Mentorn Barraclough Carey got its bid together in collusion with Sky, ITN initiated a gruelling series of lunches with Lloyd to find out exactly what C4 wanted. The answer was simple: audiences inherited from programmes like Chris Evans's *TFI Friday* must not flip the dial when confronted with 10-minute reports from Kosovo.

Since immediate "dumbing-down" would be too blatant, a "gradual change of emphasis" was called for: no boring-but-important stories, less foreign stuff, plenty of showbiz and loads of "attitude". This mean the replacement of high-minded *C4 News* editor Sarah Nathan by geeky *Wunderkind* Jim Gray.

Having "played with the chemistry set", almost every report now has music plastered over the soundtrack; offbeat subjects such as "human pheromone attraction" rise up the order; and hacks are encouraged to "sprinkle stardust on the show" — the nadir being deputy editor Peter Barron urging his team to "work in something about Leonardo DiCaprio". Fittingly, the decision to shut the C4 Moscow bureau was taken on the day Yeltsin sacked his government.

THE directors of Central TV met last week in their smart new building in Birmingham on the site of a former gasworks, having recently moved out of their old but larger premises around the corner in Broad Street.

Alas! The new building has insufficient space to store video tapes and documents in its library. To avoid confronting directors with the spectacle of corridors stacked high with tapes and paper, a pantechnicon was hired for the day to drive around the city ring-road with all this unsightly clutter on board until the meeting was safely over.

NEVER let it be said that Graham Creelman, managing director of milord Hollick's Anglia TV, lacks the human touch.

After ITV axed Anglia's pisspoor *The Time... The Place*, he wrote a letter to all members of the programme team, which was enclosed in their final pay packets, announcing that the decision was "good news for Anglia".

More tactfully still, he enclosed a leaflet from the Cinema and Television Benevolent Fund, and suggested they might care to make a weekly or monthly donation from their salaries to the charity. Since most of the recipients were themselves about to become unemployed, they were unable to take up his thoughtful suggestion.

BBC radio and television news editors were summoned *en masse* to Westminster recently to be lectured by Peter Mandelson on how to publicise his millennium dome. Disgruntled hacks who were tempted to assert their independence by boycotting the event received a stern warning from BBC secretariat apparatchik Richard Ayre: "The director-general would not be best pleased."

BBC editors have already been irritated by a barrage of memos from Birtist bosses advising them not to give "too large a platform" to critics of the dome. Now, it seems, they are obliged to take instruction from the dome minister himself — who is, by a remarkable coincidence, a close friend, holiday companion and former employee of John Birt.

RUPERT Murdoch's decision to buy the LA Dodgers baseball team does not reflect any personal interest in sport other than the usual one of making huge sums of money, sacking people and wiping out competitors.

The Digger wanted the Dodgers to fill screen time on his Fox Sports channel. Last year Fox showed 40 Dodgers games; this year the new owner will ensure that 80 are screened.

A similar approach is likely this side of the Atlantic where Sky's contracts to screen major football games are nearing their end. Elisabeth Murdoch is already worried that soccer clubs will decide to handle their own broadcasting rather than rely on Sky.

Leeds United's experiment with the internet, which saw match coverage supplied free (albeit very slowly) attracted strong disapproval from Sky, not least because it showed what clubs could do with their own fast, clean digital TV channels.

In the same way that they currently offer team news by premium rate telephone, clubs will be able to sell TV coverage through their own channels, either cutting out the middleman (and his daughter) or reducing them to the role of distributors rather than producers.

One way to counter this is to buy outright control or substantial minority interests in premier league clubs, many of which are now quoted on the stock market. Unlike in Los Angeles, over here at least Murdoch controls enough newspapers to provide sympathetic cross-promotion. Perhaps Newcastle, its share price depressed by the *News of the Screws* revelations, would prove an appropriate first investment.

ON 17 March the BBC TV programme *Spotlight*, which broadcasts to the south-west of England, carried a gushing report about a catamaran powered by a sail which looks like an aircraft wing. Neither the rival ITV programme, *Westcountry Live*, nor the regional newspaper, the *Western Morning News*, considered the story worth a mention. They saw it as no more than a shameless puff. So why the BBC interest?

The catamaran is made by Walker Wingsail plc, whose chairman, John Walker, won a famous libel case against *Yachting World* in 1993. He has since threatened similar action against other hacks who question his "revolutionary" yacht design — or who wonder what exactly he has to show for the £13m of small investors' money spent so far.

Undaunted by the threats, another BBC Southwest programme, *Close-Up*, recently gave airtime to dissident investors in Walker Wingsail who wanted John Walker removed from office to

save the firm from capsizing. Though it was a pretty tame investigation — and was held over by BBC lawyers until after Walker Wingsail's agm — Walker was predictably indignant.

"I at once telephoned BBC Southwest," he boasted in a letter to shareholders soon afterwards, "to remind them of the BBC's proud tradition of fairness and our present agreement with them is that they will simply make a short and positive follow-up film based around some plane sailing aboard one of our boats. That should be very satisfactory."

Very satisfactory for Walker — though perhaps not for the unsuspecting viewers, who weren't told that the "news item" was in fact a free advert.

LEGAL NEWS

WHY are Sir Elton John and his manager John Reed having to waste time and money pursuing computer stalker Benjamin Pell, the soon to be taken over Mirror Group and the PR Max Clifford through the courts?

Pell freely admits hacking into Reed's computer, obtaining personal financial information about the singer's spending habits, and then flogging it all to Piers Morgan, editor of the *Mirror*, who paid him handsomely.

Rather than waiting for the civil action to wind its way through the courts, surely this is the perfect opportunity for data protection registrar Elizabeth France to test an amendment to the data protection act which makes it a specific criminal offence "for a person to knowingly procure the disclosure of personal data" from computer files.

Last October a private investigator, Rachel Barry, was convicted of 12 offences of procuring data by gaining access to BT's files to read peoples' telephone bills and access their ex-directory numbers. Her clients included the *News of the World*, the *People*, the *Mail on Sunday* and the *Express*, but mysteriously none of the papers was prosecuted.

If Ms France were to act it would allay fears that only hackers get prosecuted rather than the people who pay for their illegal activities. No doubt Elton knows all about this amendment now he has hired a top class litigator, one Lindsay Moffatt, late of Peter Carter-Fuck & Partners.

INTRIGUED by the mysterious appointment of Judge William Hubert Dunn, once a criminal barrister, as chief immigration adjudicator (*Eye* 945), a reader helpfully sends a copy of the law lists in the late 1960s and early 1970s, highlighting the prestigious barristers' chambers at 5 Kings Bench Walk in the Temple.

The lists included Michael Havers, who became an MP in 1970; John Morris, who had been an MP since 1959; and W.H. Dunn, who joined the chambers in 1961. All three went on to higher things. Havers became Mrs Thatcher's attorney-general in 1979; Morris became Welsh secretary in 1974 and attorney-general after last year's general election; and Dunn became a judge in 1993.

Though Morris's Labour allegiances contrasted with Dunn's firm commitment to Ulster Unionism, the two barristers got on very well together and often joined each other for a drink after a hard day in chambers.

DOING THE ROUNDS

Cleft Lip And Palate Surgery

IN EYE 937 (14 November), MD exposed the dismal state of cleft lip and palate repair in the UK, with large numbers of centres doing relatively few operations with poor cosmetic results.

An audit in the north-west had found that 48 percent of children require major and often multiple reconstructive surgery, Royal College of Surgeons guidelines were being flouted and a petty turf war was being fought by plastic surgeons and maxillo-facial surgeons to the detriment of patients.

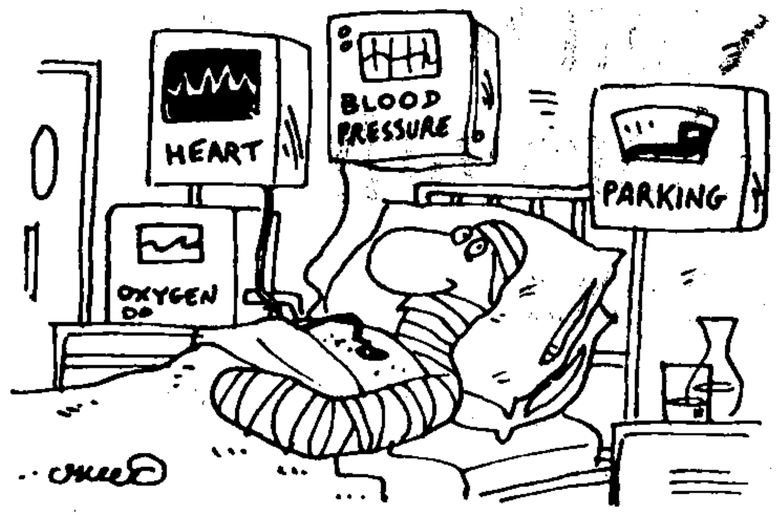
Now, four months later, the clinical standards advisory group (CSAG) of the department of health has echoed the *Eye*'s warnings. After investigating 297 children aged 5 and 277 aged 12 who had all undergone cleft repair in Britain, they found that 40 percent had poor dental bite, less than a third had a good lip appearance at the age of 12 and under half could speak with normal intelligibility at that age.

The CSAG stated that of the 57 centres carrying out the operation, only six to eight provided good to excellent care and the overall results were five to 12 times poorer than in the six European centres examined. The key factor causing poor training and poor results from "specialists" (*sic*) doing one or two operations a year was "competition between plastic and maxillo-facial surgeons".

It is now almost six years since the *Eye* was first to publish the equally unimpressive audit figures for paediatric cardiac surgery at the Bristol Royal Infirmary and highlighted the need for surgical teams not just to audit their work but to act on the results, retiring gracefully from operations which may be beyond them. This latest report found that not only are many surgeons continuing to perform operations they are not competent to do, but they are failing to keep adequate records or perform proper audit.

Only in the area of alveolar bone grafting is there enough information to compare the two specialties and the results are not pretty. Fifty percent of cases carried out by plastic surgeons failed compared to 32 percent done by maxillo-facial surgeons. A further factor in this gross incompetence was the desire of trust managers to do the operations locally, cheaply, occasionally and badly, rather than refer to a more expensive super-specialist centre which may do 50 successful operations a year using highly specialist teams.

Whether plastic and maxillo-facial surgeons can bury the hatchet and work in teams for the good of their patients remains to be seen. At least two members of the CSAG itself appear not to see eye to eye. John Williams, dean of the faculty of dental surgery, described the findings as "appalling" and added: "Cleft palate [repair] is part of the training



requirements for plastic surgeons. This is quite clearly wrong as it's the only operation they do in the mouth. So when they do one, their expertise is less than adequate."

But fellow CSAG member and plastic surgeon Roy Sanders countered: "We've been operating on lips and palates and reconstructing tongues for years. It's plastic surgery that has developed all the processes for reconstruction." In reality, some surgeons in each speciality are very good at the operation, many aren't. For the best advice on your nearest specialist centre contact CLAPA, the Cleft Lip and Palate Association, on 0171 824 8110.

M.D.

DOWN ON THE FARM

Green Fields

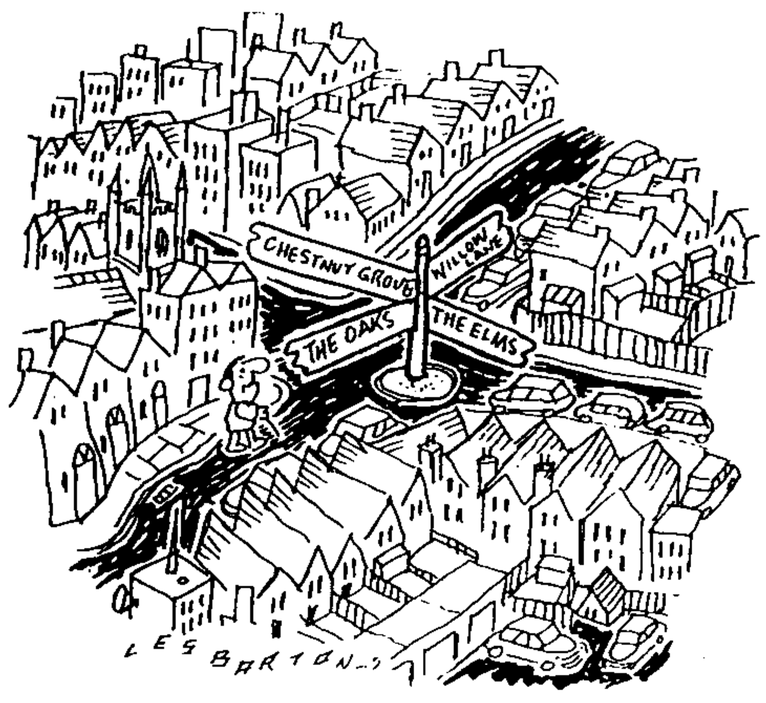
JOHN PRESCOTT, in his environment secretary hat, says all the right things about protecting the countryside. But rather than read his lips, watch his hands.

His recent planning white paper talks about "a green and pleasant land we can hand on", and about being "strongly committed to green belt...financial incentives which favour brownfield over greenfield sites... more flexibility to local authorities in planning..." etc, etc.

But in reality the government is determined to impose 1.8m new houses over 520 square miles of English farmland by 2016, a figure which supposes that the other 60 percent of new housing goes on problematic "brownfield" sites, where there are as yet no financial incentives for developers. Moreover, local authorities have little choice: in West Sussex, for example, the carefully considered structure plan proposing less building has been overruled.

Green belts, according to Council for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE), are under threat as never before. Local authorities are releasing vast areas of land, often in response to housing quotas imposed on them. While Prescott has a duty to refuse development except in "very special" circumstances, suddenly every case is, er, "very special".

The CPRE strongly favours urban regeneration, particularly on the huge area of derelict land in cities.



But there is no sign of the promised financial carrots, so although Lord Rogers' taskforce may find such land, no one knows how he will persuade owners to build houses on it.

Still, some people seem remarkably unruffled about a further serious loss of rural England. Take land agents. Harry St John, a partner with Cluttons, thinks the countryside is overprotected by "the Greens", especially the boring bits. "The overall percentage reduction of rural land is still relatively small," he wrote recently.

Land agents can afford to be cheerful. As landowners ride the coming housing boom, agents stand to collect an awesome £3bn in fees for doing what they do best, which is very little.

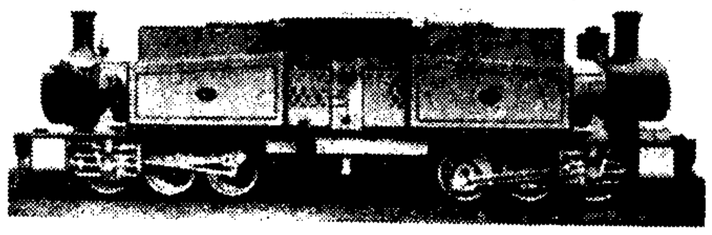
Landowners stand to rake in up to £150bn flogging green fields with planning permission for houses. But by an odd twist of fiscal fate, if they then use the money to buy yet more land, they don't pay a penny of development land tax or capital gains tax. When Gordon Brown missed his second chance to close this loophoole, gasps of incredulous relief were heard echoing down on the farm.

'Gumboot'

£500 million ■ extra health spending announced in the Budget

£700 million ■ annual cost of absenteeism in the NHS

Number crunching



SIGNAL FAILURES

Rail safety: Focus on the Watford and Southall train crashes

THE acquittal of train driver Peter Afford of killing Ruth Holland in the 1996 Watford train crash has been greeted with consternation in the sumptuous offices of Railtrack and at the department of transport. What will happen now to the long-awaited inquiry into the similar, more lethal train disaster at Southall?

The inquiry has been opened and immediately postponed "pending possible prosecution". Until the unanimous decision of the jury at Luton crown court in the Afford case, everyone in charge of the industry assumed that the only possible pending prosecution was that of the driver of the Southall train, Larry Harrison, who admits he went past a red signal.

But Peter Afford also admitted that he went past a red signal, and he walks free. His lawyers claimed that the signal he passed often caused trouble to drivers because of the varying speed restrictions in the area; and that the "overlap" between the red signal and the danger crossing was far shorter than that allowed by the railway's own rules. Indeed, if the gap had been as long as the minimum allowed, the crash would never have happened.

Afford's case was greatly assisted by Railtrack's urgent action immediately after the Watford crash to change speed limits, cut away foliage and increase the overlap. The jury clearly agreed with Mr Afford's argument that the collapsing infrastructure of the railway was far more to blame for the crash than the engine driver.

John McCarthy, a project manager who was on the Watford train, was shocked at the failure of Railtrack to publish the report it promised passengers at the time of the accident. "Could it be," he asks in a letter to the *Eye*, "that had the report been published as soon as it was completed there would have been no alternative for the CPS but to have put Railtrack in the dock along with the train driver?... It would appear that the trial jury were unhappy to see one person being scapegoated for the sins, in part at least, of Railtrack."

The state of the train and the track at Southall was even worse than at Watford. To start with, as everyone now knows, one of the train's warning systems was turned off and the other wasn't working. Moreover, the decision to allow a freight train to cross a fast passenger line could never have been taken in the old days of British Rail, and was only brought about by the demands of the private freight train company for equal access to the track because it pays equal rates.

A prosecution of Mr Harrison would be even less likely to succeed than the case against Mr Afford. The alternative is to prosecute the driver, the railway company and Railtrack simultaneously, a course which could lead to jail sentences for top managers. That will never do, so the most likely outcome is no action at all.

'Dr B. Ching'

Aim to eat warming, high carbohydrate males to fill you up and boost your energy - lots of fresh vegetables, home made soups and plenty of fruit, stewed if you prefer something warm. *Axe Valley Journal*

Rotten Boroughs

Domewatch

THINGS do not bode well for the Millennium Challenge, a nationwide series of events and activities which will usher in the new millennium.

In charge of the initiative is one Joe Simpson, a former chief officer of the ITV Telethon, a one-time senior executive of BBC Worldwide Learning — and graduate of Islington borough council.

Simpson, who now wears a wristwatch which counts the number of hours, minutes and seconds until midnight on 31 December 1999, has been entrusted with the task of ensuring that people get wired up to the internet via BT's free Mill-e-Mail (*sic*) project, and that the nation's children contribute to an internet record of their communities in the Tesco SchoolNet 2000 scheme.

Let's hope the Challenge fares better than Simpson's great project in the north London borough of the early 80s, where he played a crucial role in getting the council to set up a network of 24 mini town halls to bring services "closer to the people". Ever since, Islington has been strangled by bureaucracy and costs of administering services have soared by £20m. Now, after 15 years' chaos, the council is scrapping the entire apparatus.

PS: How did Simpson land his current hot job? Certainly not because, when he chaired Islington's neighbourhood services, his mate, the council's housing chairman, was Chris Smith, now secretary of state for culture, media and sport.

Haringey

WHEN Haringey councillors were asked to decide the future of a community space in Tottenham, their council officers had already done the groundwork for them. The officers found that of all the applicants only two were suitable (financially viable, of benefit to the area, etc): Mencap and the Kurdish Advice Centre.

Alas, Labour councillors had other ideas and members voted for the Tottenham Community Project (TCP), even though it had not been proven financially viable. Why did they ignore advice?

TCP has historical links with the constituency Labour party to whom it has lent its offices for meetings; and it has also helped Labour locally in election campaigns. As one councillor put it: "You don't stab you comrades in the back". But you can stab your constituents, Mencap and the Kurdish Advisory Centre in the back, it seems.

Bracknell Forest

RESIDENTS of the grim Berkshire town knew that the last thing they needed was a new fast food joint. So they were delighted when council officers opposed a planning application to replace a grocery in council-owned premises with a take-away restaurant called Pizza de Action.

Despite officers' reports, letters of objection and a petition signed by 144 residents, all the Tory councillors on the planning committee voted in favour. This was good news for the co-owner of Pizza De Action, Paul Bettison, who also happens to be... Tory leader of Bracknell Forest council.

SEX CHANGE OF THE WEEK

WOMEN Labour group members on Bristol city council had their PC credentials tested recently — and they failed dismally.

Coun David Spry, who is now Coun Rosalind Mitchell, is the first transsexual councillor to undergo the change from a man to a woman while in office. Labour officials were supportive of his becoming a Rosalind, but when the latter tried to enter a Labour group women's meeting she was thrown out by councillors who insisted she was still more of a David.

The Labour women have been told to shape up their ideas.

Manchester

NOT content with wrecking its most famous building, the Free Trade Hall (see Piloti *passim*), Manchester city council is helping destroy its most famous cultural asset, the 140-year-old Hallé Orchestra.

With bankruptcy looming and debts of £1.1m, the orchestra recently sold antique instruments to raise £200,000. That wasn't much use when chief executive Leslie Robinson discovered the real debt was £1.4m. He duly suspended his deputy John Whibley, finance director Jack Whittaker, sacked half a dozen administrators and launched an internal inquiry. It's probably too late: the Hallé is still the most overmanned institution since British Leyland, and the suspensions will hardly help cashflow: Whibley and Whittaker remain on full pay.

Who is to blame? Manchester city council, which has continually eroded its grant to the orchestra, which it considers a legitimate bourgeois target which is out of touch with working-class aspirations. Earlier this decade it kicked the orchestra out of the homely and welcoming Free Trade Hall and made it move to the newly built, £40m Bridgewater Hall. The Bridgewater is a wretched building with pisspoor acoustics, and the Hallé pays through the nose to use it for concerts *and* rehearsals.

Junket of the Week

THE Taffia on Rhondda Cynon Taff council has had to postpone an agreeable culinary junket (sponsored by the council to the tune of £2,000), after demonstrators threatened to protest outside the Cardiff hotel where it was to be held.

The event was denounced as extravagant because the council has just put up the price of school meals. The greedy councillors still intend to go ahead with their meal, however. Perhaps they should ask their invited guest speaker, Peter Mandelson MP, to put some positive spin on it.

Meanwhile the council is paying £150,000 to Jim McAusland, a Yorkshire consultant, to fill a post the council failed to put out to tender. Mr McAusland has earned his money by reorganising the housing department. His solution? Axing 60 jobs.

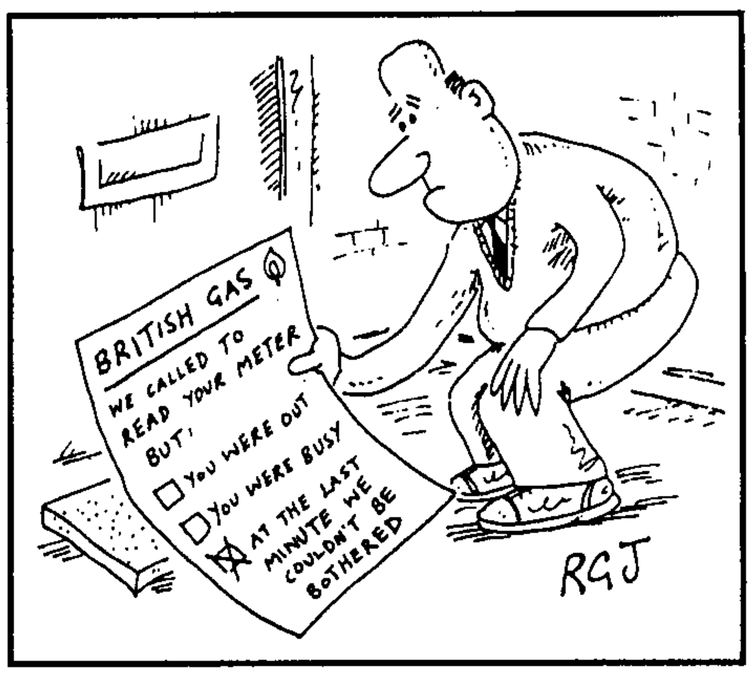
Leeds

LABOUR-controlled Leeds city council is insisting on hearing a planning application for a controversial private sporting, leisure and hotel complex — even though the council has more than a passing interest in the scheme.

Not only is the authority giving political backing to such a use for the site, but it sold the land to Caspian/Leeds Sporting plc and also holds £2.5m in shares in the company.

Odd, then, that council leader Brian "Sleep" Walker is determined the authority should hear the application itself — despite the recommendation of the Nolan committee on standards in public life that such applications, where a local authority has an interest in the land in question, should be referred to the secretary of state for a decision.

A letter from the company to shareholders may explain why councillors are so keen to bend over backwards. "There is additional consideration payable to the council in the form of the provision by Caspian to the council of an executive box facility in the stadium and 500 tickets to all Leeds United first team home games."



Pseuds Corner

This concept of music as aristocracy unsurprisingly extends beyond any simple notions of genre and reaches deep into the core of Goldie's view of the hardware (and software) he uses. Where once he might have boasted that he and his peers were literally joyriding the technology, today he sees his approach as cutting deep into the heart of industrial society's feudal fabric.

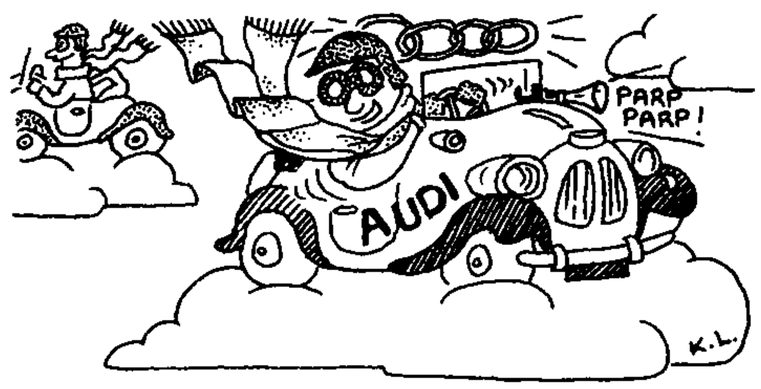
"In my car I've got this built-in computer which tells me the best way to get to my destination," he explains, "but sometimes I decide I want to go in a different direction and I override it. That's me placing my own sense of aristocracy, but I'll turn right whenever I want to. Which is how I view machinery. The program might say I've got to take the track in one direction but we just override it and go down another street."

Future Music

Crash theory: Blanchot, Derrida and Cronenburg

The key to *Crash* is the end of movement. Thus the film can be seen as a metaphoric explanation of the abandonment of the metanarrative of progress. The paper will explore the idea of *Crash* by examining the writing of Blanchot on disaster (emphasising the inaccessibility of history, ie the impossibility of journeying back). Further the work of Derrida in *Specters of Marx* will provide a commentary on the abandonment of the future, which accompanies the end of movement, and which follows from *Crash*. Left in the present, where movement had stopped, what is left for us but to fetishize the relics of our lost projects? So, the final part of the paper reads Cronenburg through Freuds's writing on fetishism. The paper is "work in progress", and the emphasis will be on the overall conception, and on the work of Blanchot (which will be connected to disputes about collaborationism).

Seminar, Centre for the History of the Human Sciences, University of Durham



Dear Mrs xxxxx
Thank you for choosing an Audi.
You may not realise it, but when you drive one of our motor cars, you also experience something else just as unique and pleasurable: a philosophy.

Letter sent by Audi UK to recent purchasers

Seen from above, the tail (of the Alfa 156) is tapered and tends to close — a solution which brings a certain touch of calculated ambiguity to the complex styling of the saloon.

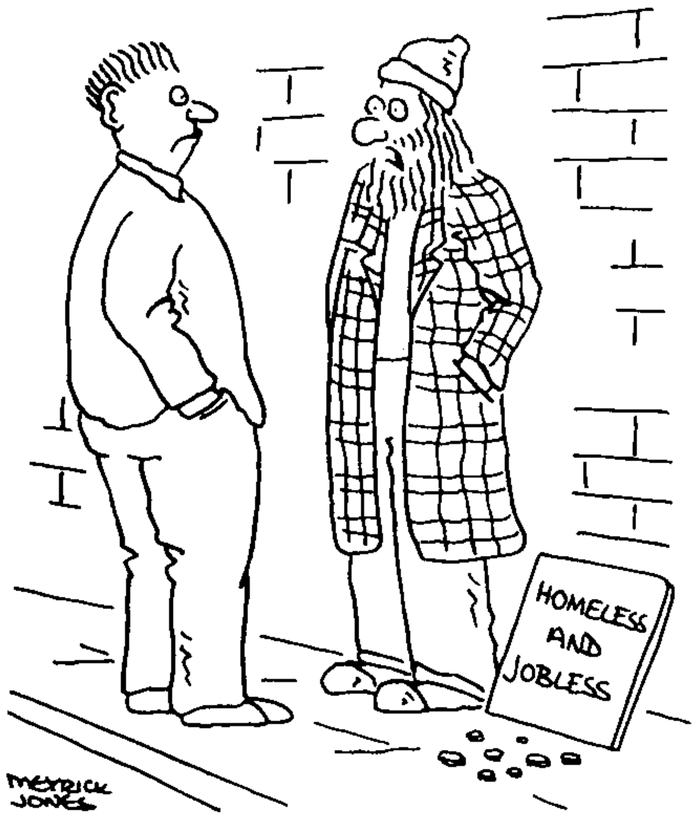
Alfa Romeo Website

And intuition is important. He and Libeskind looked at the V&A design, asking if it could be built in mud or salt. Balmond exclaimed, "A vibration should run up the form", knowing as he said it that he was implying a mathematical mosaic based on the Fibonacci series and a limited number of tessellated forms. An intuition framed a mathematical function, and from then on it was only a matter of time before deciding on the terracotta tiles.

JEREMY MELVIN
Architects' Journal

CONTRIBUTORS: Harry Goodman, Anon, R. Clay, A. Coward, Anon.

£10 paid for entries



"It all started with wearing casual clothes at the office on Fridays"

TAX AND TAXMEN

IN THE mid 1980s "stars" like Terry Wogan, Cliff Richard, Steve Davies and Shirley Porter lined up to invest in conifers after sharp-eyed accountants spotted a tax-avoidance loophole.

The land earmarked for tree planting was in the unique peat moorland of Caithness and East Sutherland and was mostly owned by poor Highland lairds. To bring government and local authorities on board, the tree planters predicted spectacular job-creation prospects: 2,000 at least. Successive Conservative Scottish secretaries of state, George Younger, Ian Laing and Malcolm Rifkind supported planting, as did Caithness and Sutherland MP Robert Maclennan.

However, warnings of massive environmental damage voiced by the government's then conservation watchdog, the Nature Conservancy Council, were ignored. As was the advice of the national audit office (NAO) that this spurious forestry wouldn't provide long-term jobs. Scientific evidence presented by those who were concerned was rubbished by factory-tree farmers Fountain Forestry Limited. And in the end 200,000 acres of irreplaceable moorland, the habitat of rare species of bird like the black throated diver, were ploughed and densely planted.

The cost to the nation in tax avoidance, subsidy and grant aid was around £25m. Today, ten years after chancellor Nigel Lawson shut the tax loophole, UK timber prices have collapsed, the trees have been devastated by wind and attacked by pine beauty moth. The rich investors have sold their holdings. And the problem now for the Highland council is what to do with 200,000 acres of worthless conifers? Step forward the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, which has bought up a 3,000 acre block of planted land and is presently digging up 280,000 tax-avoidance trees planted using public money.

Highland council planners and the Forestry Commission say that nobody was to blame for this act of environmental vandalism. Those who should have protected the Flow country insist that the whole episode is "history" and could never happen again. But now, in virgin moorland between Lairg and Crask in Sutherland, the tractors are to go to work again — the Forest Authority, part of the Forestry Commission, is inviting private firms to tender for contracts to plant more worthless, subsidised conifers.

EVERY taxpayer in the country had to submit a tax return by 31 January under the new self-assessment rules or face hefty fines and interest charges for the tardy. Now the boot is on the other foot, however, a rather different attitude prevails.

Self-employed "customers" of the Inland Revenue's Contributions Agency were recently told that a new computer system is being developed for them. This work is being done by some old *Eye* friends, the computer firm EDS (of Child Support Agency fame).

The agency told customers: "As a result of the modernisation you may experience some delays over the coming months. We very much regret any inconvenience this may cause." This message will thrill those being fined for their own tardiness.

Letters

Private Eye

Getting the Hump-phrys

Sir,

So, TODAY *is "dumbing down" because we run an average of one short, light item in every two and a half hours of programme? It's a bit like saying Dosteyevsky "dumbed down" by putting a humorous aside on page 263 of* THE BROTHERS KARAMAZOV.

Yours,
ROD LIDDLE,

Editor, Today.

Yawning room only

Sir,

I read with interest the media gossip (20 March) about the Chris Smith session at The Production Show — it seems that after years of grovelling and brown-nosing to various meejah types my efforts have been rewarded with your plug for me, and the event.

Does this mean I have finally made it in the world of TV? I would like to renew my subscription immediately!

Unusually, you got your figures wrong. The 120-seater hall was actually overcrowded, with paying customers sitting on the floor. A small number of free invites went to Production Show speakers and VIP guests — "My mates" were all in the bar.

Yours ingratiatingly,
TIM MACPHERSON,

The Production Show.

Toxic shock

Sir,

With reference to Chemistry Setback (EYE *946, 20 March 1998).*

I work at the Medical Toxicology Unit, Guy's and St Thomas' Hospital Trust, which is part of the National Health Service, **NOT ICI***'s Medical Toxicology Unit as you suggested. Could you correct this? Apart from that I enjoyed the issue.*

Yours faithfully,
DR VIRGINIA MURRAY,

Consultant Occupational & Environmental Toxicologist, Guy's & St Thomas' Hospital Trust.

The flying doctors

Sir,

In the comments made on the PFI-funded Stonehaven hospital (EYE *946), your HP Saucy columnist displays a scant knowledge of Scottish geography. The town of Stonehaven — accidental birthplace of Lord Reith — and its new medical facility lies more than 100 miles to the south-east of Inverness and David Stewart's constituency!*

Yours sincerely,
GEOFF GOOLNIK,

Newtonhill, Stonehaven.

World of Cottaging

Sir,

Re: World of Sport, EYE *946, page 9: "(Fulham) has only an outside hope of a place in the end-of-season promotion play-offs."*

Fan male, EYE *946, page 14: "...Fulham FC, now challenging for promotion for the second successive season."*

Fulham are indeed currently in a play-off position. Could it possibly be that someone at your organ hates football as much as they hate Fulham's shopkeeper chairman? The phoney pharaoh may be fuggin' loathsome, but at least he's consistently loathsome.

Awa' the Cottagers,

Regards,
JON ALLEN,

Via e-mail.

PS: Are you planning a dome to celebrate your 1,000th issue?

Lookalike

Camille

Dot

Sir,

I couldn't help noticing the similarity between this famous opinion-former Dot Cotton of EastEnders and Camille Paglia. Could they, by any chance, be related?

Yours faithfully,
K.F. JOHN,

London SE21.

Credit Dewi

Sir,

I notice in your piece on Gwynedd councillor Owain Williams — Rotten Boroughs (20 March 1998) you claim he has long campaigned for inward migration to Wales to be stopped, implying perhaps that he is some kind of racist. What he has actually campaigned for along with many in Wales is local control over the housing market and legislation to match house building to local need.

This is to stop "developments" like those at Morfa Bychan in Gwynedd where 800 holiday homes are to be built in a village of about 100 houses despite huge local opposition and the objections of Gwynedd county council. Not only will these homes be an environmental eye sore but they will be a body blow to the Welsh language in one of its few remaining strongholds.

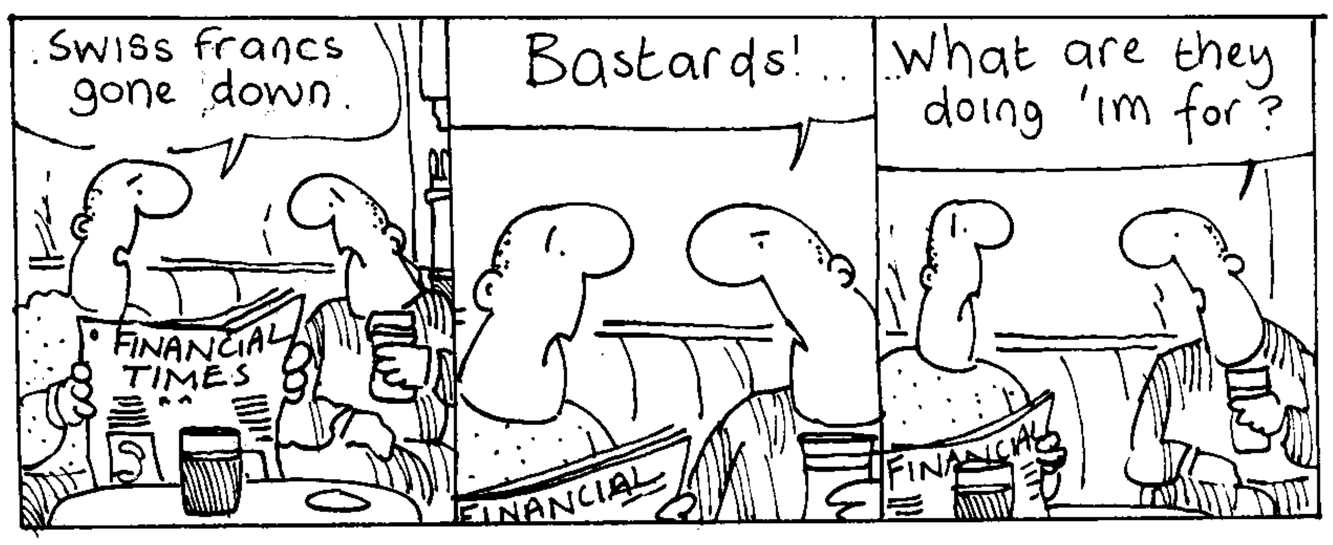
In short, many of us in Wales would like to see houses treated as homes, a right not a commodity to be bought and sold for profit!

Yours,
DEWI JONES,

Holywell.

YOBS

HUSBAND



I-SPY *Port Adelaide, South Australia*

Submitted by Mrs P. Fox. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Gumbooted into touch

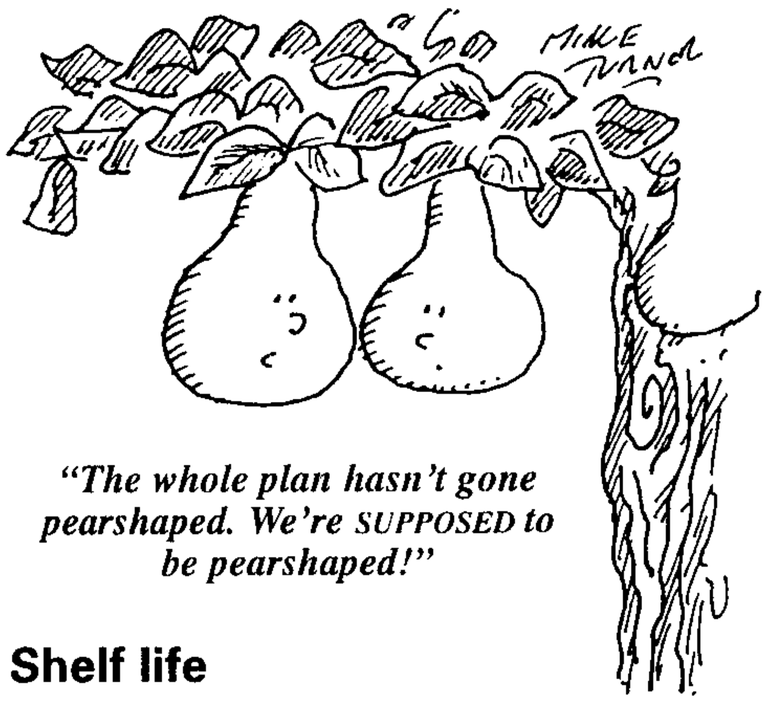
Sir,

I feel I must take issue with Gumboot over his overly-robust comments on food safety (EYE *945). It is quite false of him to suggest that exposure to harmful strains of E. coli (as opposed to the six grams you normally have in your gut) is somehow inevitable, and indeed, would be beneficial as it would give you "immunity".*

Your chances of being infected with E. coli 0157:H7 are not high: only 1 in 100,000 per year. But there is a high (12 percent) chance of people who are infected having an "adverse patient outcome", ie dying or being disabled. I feel that the 400 people a year who spend between 3 and 12 weeks in intensive care as a result of E. coli 0157:H7 infection would say that it was a very high price to pay for "immunity" (actually never proven) to an infection they are statistically unlikely ever to get again.

DR HOWARD COOPER,

Imperial College School of Medicine, London W2.



"The whole plan hasn't gone pearshaped. We're SUPPOSED to be pearshaped!"

Shelf life

Sir,

Hellman's cartoon on page 11 of EYE *946 has it wrong. Those whose job it is to "restratify brand hierarchies to empower renewed appetite appeal" are not packaging designers but supermarket shelf-stackers. In the trade we are sometimes also called trainee managers, for which privilege we receive around 50p an hour less!*

Yours,
JUDITH GRAHAM,

Lisburn, Co. Antrim.

Loadsamoney for old rope

Sir,

Re: Harry Enfield's Bores (32. The Creative Genius). Could this possibly have been written by the same Harry Enfield who so willingly prostitutes his talents to the advertising industry any time it asks? Loadsahumbug.

Yours,
GILES MONTGOMERY,

Via e-mail.

Wrong signal

Sir,

Last July (EYE *928) Signal Failures did a hatchet job on Prism Rail and predicted that its share price, then 290p, was liable to fall. This week the Prism share price is 485p, about 67 percent higher than at the time of your dire warnings.*

Regards,
NICK THOMPSON,

Via e-mail.

Taylor report

Sir,

In EYE *946 you refer to Graham Taylor's "expletive-riddled rants" against the* SUN *as being "one of the most memorable elements of World Cup '90". Funny, as Taylor's calamitous reign did not begin until after Italia '90, and he was granted 2 years' grace before the tabloids got the knives out.*

In fact Taylor's creative use of Anglo-Saxon only came to light in the excellent 1993 CUTTING EDGE *documentary, "The Impossible Job", which focused on England's disastrous qualifying campaign for USA '94. Even then his four-letter tirades were directed at players and match officials rather than the tabloids, whom Taylor tolerated as a necessary evil.*

Was this merely an honest mistake on your part, or further evidence of the EYE*'s snobbish and ill-informed attitude towards the Beautiful Game? I think we should be told.*

Yours faithfully,
TIM RUSSELL,

London W14.

Sir,

What is Graham Taylor pouring over his SUN*: tears, bile, salt and vinegar? I think we should be told.*

Yours sincerely,
J. PENTNEY, (nit-picker to the nobility),

Coventry.

Cheap remarks

Sir,

Your "poet" E.J. Thribb seems to enjoy poking fun at dead people, his latest victim being Lloyd Bridges (EYE *946). For the record, Mr Bridges was an extremely gifted character actor and a devoted husband and father. What is the significance of the number 17½ after Thribb's name? Is that his fucking IQ?*

Yours faithfully,
LESLIE GLEN (MR),

Saltcoats, Ayrshire.

Sir,

E.J. Thribb speaks nonsense. The price of a return Cheadle Hulme to Manchester (Piccadilly) is £2.10, cheap rate.

GEOFF HOUGH,

Cheadle Hulme, Cheshire.

Many Behaving Badly

Bedwellty-time stories?

Sir,

I am writing an authorised biography of the Right Hon Neil Kinnock. I would like the biography to be as authoritative as possible. I would be grateful therefore if readers with anecdotes, eyewitness accounts, letters or other material of potential interest could write to me at the following address:

Dr Martin Westlake
81 rue Artan
B-1030 Brussels
Belgium.

All material will be treated in confidence.

Yours sincerely,
DR MARTIN WESTLAKE,

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"Fortunately, Paul Scholes' injury wasn't as bad as we'd hoped for."
TREVOR BROOKING, BBC1
(Chris Jones)

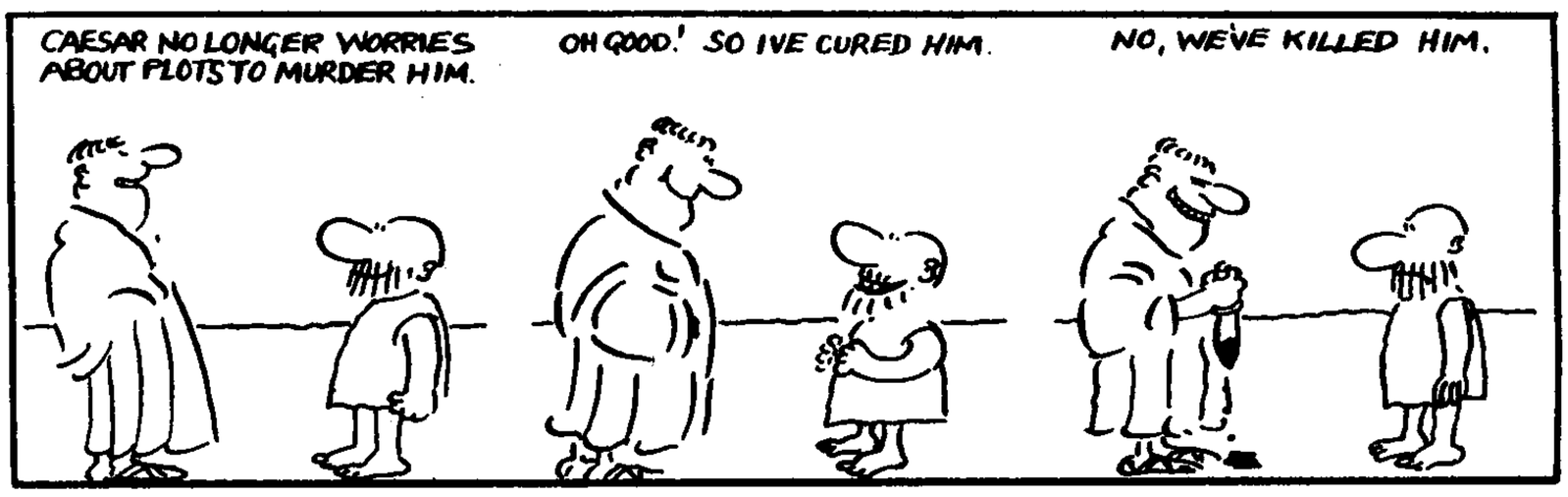
"The British Isles from top to bottom have a great reputation as a gay tourist destination."
DAVID ALLPORT, Radio 5
(Dan Smith)

"He was in the right place at the right time, but he might have been elsewhere on a different afternoon."
TONY GUBBA, BBC1
(Matthew Smith)

"What he's got is legs which is different to the other midfielders we've got."
LENNIE LAWRENCE, ITV
(Peter Woodhouse)

"Originally my mother was Spanish, then she became a Jehovah's Witness."
GINGER SPICE, BBC1
(John Sampson)

HOM SAP BY DAVID AUSTIN

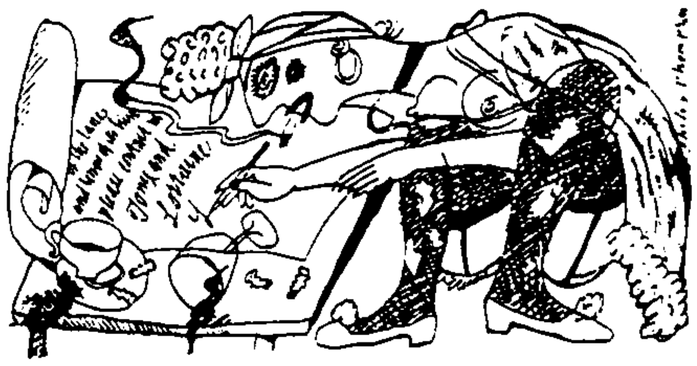


FUNNY OLD WORLD

● "Sir, My family and I recently moved into Silver Street, Besthorpe, and discovered a disgusting road sign directly outside our home reading 'Sluts Hole Lane'.

"Feeling that the name is inappropriate and offensive, I have approached the parish council with a view to changing it to a more pleasing name, but the opinion of the council is that the name has historic merit and is as acceptable in today's world as it was in previous times, when apparently the word 'slut' had a slightly different meaning.

"I, and I am sure members of the parish council, would be interested to know what others feel. Is 'Sluts Hole' an appropriate name for



a lane and would they mind having it outside their front gate? If you can help in any way with the naming of the lane and know of its history, please contact us. Tony and Lorraine Holden, Walnut Tree Cottage, Silver Street, Besthorpe." *(Wymondham & Attleborough Mercury, 20/2/98. Spotter: K. Browne)*

—●—

● "Yes. I admit signing court papers with the name 'Adolf Hitler'," Judge Richard Deacon Jones told a judicial misconduct hearing in Omaha, Nebraska. "I was only venting my frustration with colleagues, but I agree that in retrospect it was unnecessary, wrong, and stupid."

During the five-hour hearing, Judge Jones (who had been suspended on full pay by the State Supreme Court in November) admitted several other misdemeanours, while replying to a 17-point complaint filed by the Nebraska Commission on Judicial Qualifications. "They were nothing more than pranks that went wrong. Yes, I threw a lighted firecracker into a colleague's office. Yes, I sent him an anonymous note containing a death threat. Yes, I admit setting bonds for 'a zillion dollars'. Yes, I admit using profanity on more than a dozen occasions when describing Judge Jane Prochaska to court employees. But I categorically deny Judge Prochaska's allegations of inappropriate touching. I never touched her in the elevator either time, and I did not assault or batter her. How dare she suggest such a thing. I *deeply* resent her accusations."

The judicial commission later recommended action to the State Supreme Court. Penalties could range from a public reprimand to removal from the bench. *(The National Law Journal [Washington D.C.] 9/2/98. Spotter: Kenneth Skilling)*

—●—

● *"Before I came down to earth from heaven, my plan was already laid out," Mario Legaspi told a formal hearing of the Commission of Elections in Manila. "My Father On High had decided that I should join the race to become the next President of the Philippines, so that I can save the poor."*

Legaspi, 41, who had come to the hearing dressed as Jesus Christ (in shepherd's clothes, with a crook in his right hand and a lamb beneath his left arm), was one of eighty-one people who have registered to run for President, ahead of the May 11 election. Anger erupted at the hearing when Chairman Bernardo Pardo threatened to disqualify "nuisance candidates who will make a mockery of this country at the polls."

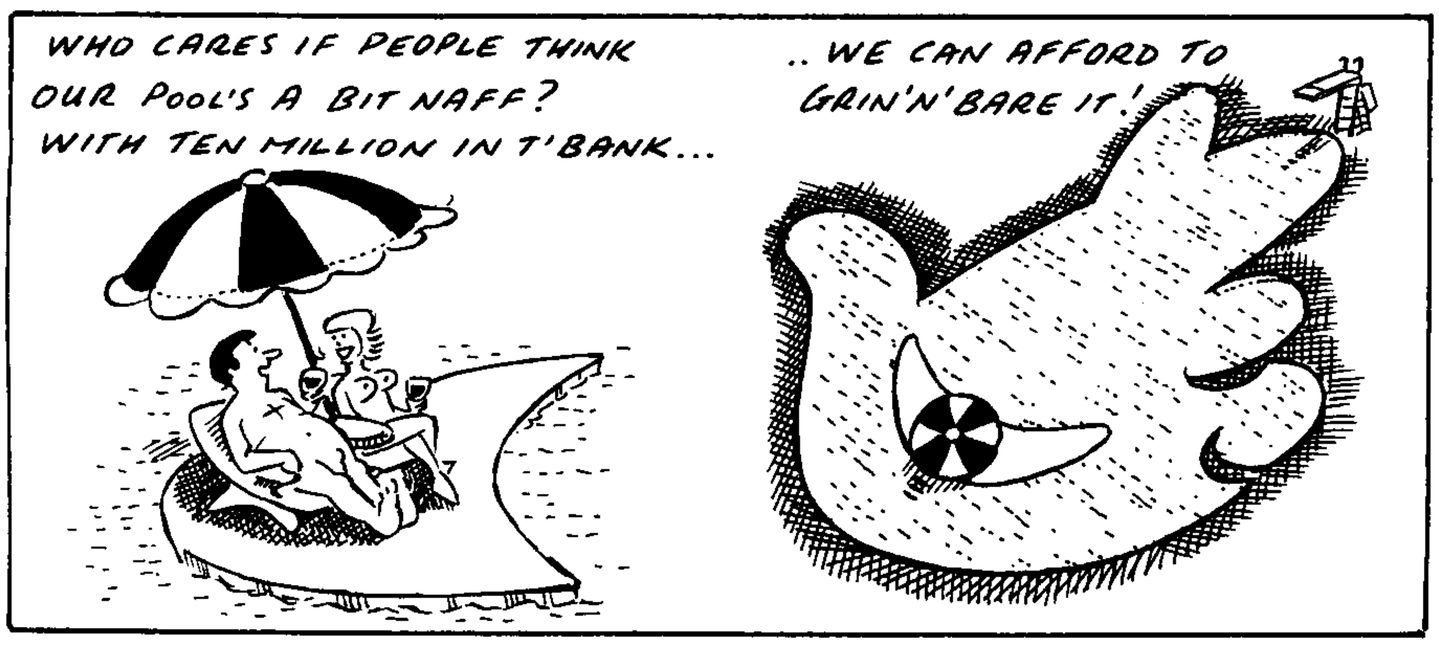
Scientist Jose Ocampo, who had already been disqualified from running in two previous elections, demanded a chance to run. "I am an emancipated scientist. If elected, I will consult my horoscope before making all decisions of state, to ensure that they are correct," he shouted, before sobbing hysterically on the floor and being forcibly ejected from the hearing. Former First Lady Imelda Marcos insisted on her right to run for President, even though she had recently been sentenced to 12 years imprisonment for graft. "People only want to disqualify me because they are afraid I will tell the truth about government. Anyway, I am appealing against my conviction, so my lawyer says I am technically not guilty."

Proceedings were finally brought to a halt by Radi Leonardo, who the chairman had earlier labelled a nuisance candidate. "If by nuisance you mean somebody who will release live chickens in Parliament, who will abolish all taxes, and who will order all traditional politicians to be crucified dead because they are the perpetrators of all that is evil, then yes, I am a nuisance candidate," he said. He then approached Pardo and began a chant of "resign, resign," before embracing Mrs Marcos and declaring "your husband was my idol," at which point the chairman stormed out and the meeting adjourned in chaos. (The Philippine Journal, 25/2/98. Spotter: Anon)

COMPILED BY **VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH**

The Lottery Winners

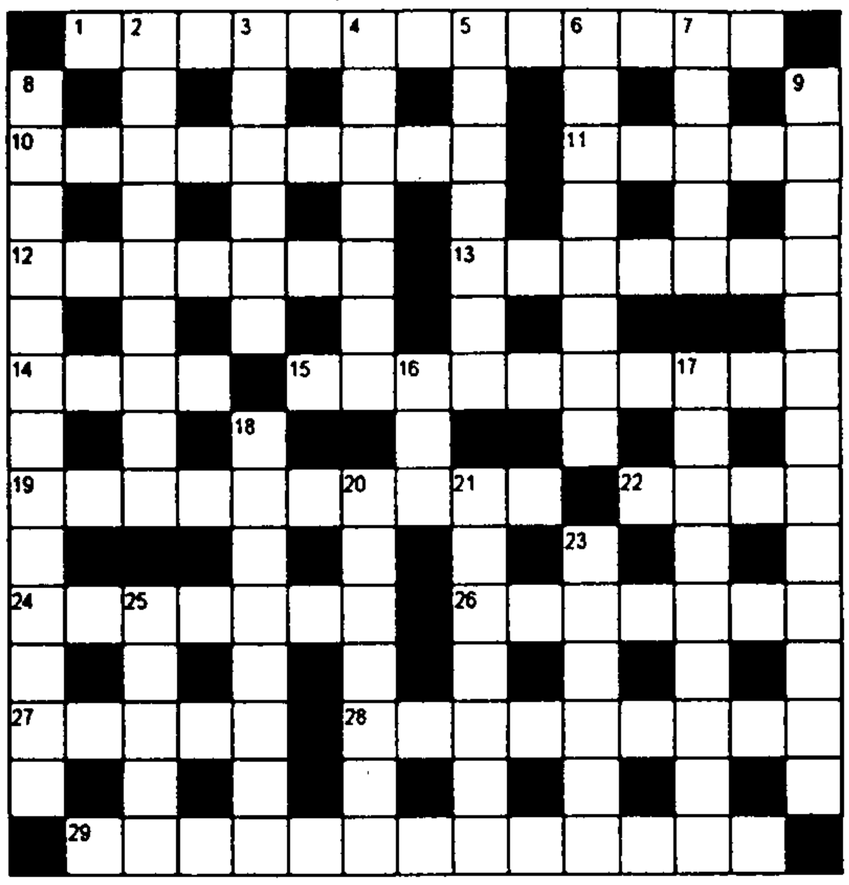
TURNER



EYE CROSSWORD 102

by Cyclops

£100 prize



ACROSS

1 Jack says it's bad for us to complain slangily by 'phone, having lost Rover as well (4,2,3,4)
10 Hear Brian's dithering half-wit (4-5)
11 Tony finally appears in broadcasts backing the country (5)
12 On taking a piss, we hear, in section of church, do a Chamberlain impersonation (7)
13 Bloody-minded sort creating personal stink — left the girl holding one (7)
14 Smooth-talking, grand old politician (4)
15 Ford's classic cowboy transport outfit (10)
19 Be like a national leader unalive to public scrutiny (3,2,5)
22 A broad brogue, perhaps? "Bugger off!", you say (4)
24 A camera lens angle linked to an organ (4-3)
26 Throwing up — not right impression (7)
27 Virgin's fragile barrier means Carol possibly has to go round tail of airplane (5)
28 The old queen's favourite jockey familiarly imbibing the hard stuff (9)
29 Do affairs represent the self-serving activities of Labour, Tory, etc. groups? (5,8)

DOWN

2 Puerile? Oh, could be Edward Heath for one (9)
3 Really great getting one over an old-style socialist! (6)
4 Stupid arse in collar, your next of kin? (7)
5 Use Thatcher-type negotiating tactics, giving worker the sack! (7)
6 Church gives Nadir interest in cab renovation (8)
7 (see 8)
8/7 Massive erection, an unnecessary diversion for the Tyneside motorist? (3,5,2,3,5)
9 Messenger possibly having got things off chest in tabloid paper (4,5,4)
16 A not quite fatuously senile appliance? (3)
17 The bloke's in the room at the top, denying the man upstairs (9)
18 Bury: clear favourite with surfers! (8)
20 Lech indiscriminately, knock around and you might get this (3,4)
21 Taken by those choosing to avoid the issue of sex (3,4)
23 Put money on Bill getting stress (6)
25 US ambassador embraces Latin American piece (5)

£100 prize to first correct solution opened on 09.04.98. Entries to "Crossword", Private Eye, 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG.

Solution to Crossword No. 101

Winner: K.L. HARRISON

ACROSS: 5 Mystic 7 Womanise 9 Disraeli 10 Greens 11 Engels 13 The Hague 14 Keep an eye open 16 Bosom pal 18 Oddity 20 Parley 21 Woolsack 23 Lurcher 24 Yellow.

DOWN: 1 Syrian 2 Stir 3 Émigré 4 Knee-capped 6 Chelsea 7 Whistle-blower 8 Sunburn 12 Eve Pollard 14 Know-all 15 Economy 17 Psycho 19 Tycoon 22 SDLP.

SALLY JOCKSTRAP

Winner Sportswriter of the Year

SPARE a thought for poor old Middlesbrough United ("The Teletubbies") — three matches in the West Indies and not a win in sight. Even bringing on new signing Tim Henman did nothing to stop France thrashing them 78-47.

The boat racing season is off to a good start and I was there in Brazil to shout home David Coulthard in the McLaren boat. Nice one, especially when the Oxford starting price was 174 all out.

Poor old Mike Atherton being given his cards by Newcastle Wanderers. Say what you like about Michael, he almost singlehandedly put British golf back on the map.

© All newspapers

THOSE MEMBERS OF PANEL 2000 IN FULL

Blair appoints Committee of Cool

THE following have been appointed by the Prime Minister Mr Tony Blair to sit on the prestigious Government Advisory Committee for the Re-brandification of the United Kingdom (Now Cool Britannia Plc).

Mr Derek Fatchett MP (chairman and non-entity)

Mr Tinky Winky (BBC co-ordinator)

Ms Mel C (international recording artiste)

Ms Stella Topes (daughter of Sir Spigismond and world leading fashion designer)

Ms Mariella Frostrup (broadcaster, star of Channel 5's "No one's Watching" show)

TV's **Inspector Morse** (senior police officer and Mozart specialist)

Sir Christopher Evans OBE (friend of Gazza)

Kennedy (formerly Nigella Kennedy-Lawson of the Times)

Diana's Butler (fill in name)

The cast of the Full Monty *(That's enough "cool" people. Ed.)*

That Blair/Prodi Phonecall in full

Blair: Je suis Tony Blair.

Prodi: Que?

Blair: Sono Tony Blair — Presidenti Inglaterra.

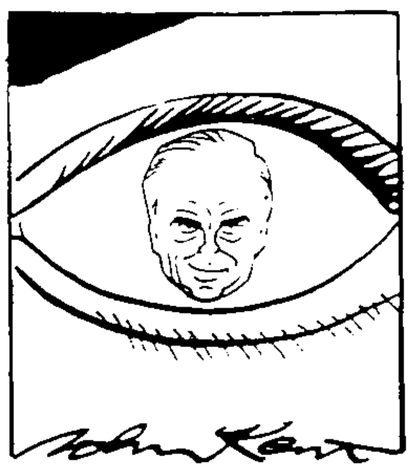
Prodi: You can speak English if you like.

Blair: Tuscani bellissima pasta pizza Amico di Geoffrey Robinson?

Prodi: Get to the point, it's 2 o'clock in the morning.

Blair: Er... j'ai un ami... Il Dirty Diggero...

(Phone goes dead as Italian Prime Minister hangs up)



MUDDLED ENGLAND GOES ON THE MARCH

by Our Cannabis Correspondents **Gunter Grass** and **Norman Stoned**

THEY CAME in their thousands, young and old, rich and poor, long haired and slightly less long haired, with just one message for London: "Er..."

D'ye Ken John Peel On Radio One

Said the leader of the march's organisers, Dame Rosie Buypot. "We've all had a spliffing afternoon and we've really shown people that smoking dope is a traditional part of the British way of life. What finer sight could there be than a group of bearded men in pink trousers sitting down together and lighting up a joint."

Tally High!

Continued Dame Rosie, "You cannot criminalise a whole section of society just because they want to go hunting for dope in the middle of the afternoon.

"People like us do not normally go on demonstrations. We prefer to stay in bed reading the Independent and trying to make sense of section two."

Dame Rosie Buypot is 78.

CHRIS SMITH 'AS GREAT AS SHAKESPEARE' SAYS NO ONE

by Our Arts Correspondent **Jonathan Keates**

CULTURE Secretary Chris Smith was last night embroiled in a huge row when no one at all compared his talents to one of the finest creative minds from the past.

"Although they lived at different times," said no one, "these two men had nothing in common. One was a brilliant cultural ambassador for Britain. And the other was Chris Smith."

Speaking from his home in Nowhere, no one said "If you compare the works of 'the Bard' with 'the Bald' what you realise is that both are equally valid although one isn't any good."

Classic Shakespeare Line

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"

Classic Smith Line

"I think people will be reading Bob Dylan in 100 years' time or do I mean Dylan Thomas, er..."

Classic Shakespeare Line

"What bloody man is that?"

Classic Smith Line

"My name is Chris Smith? And may I introduce my partner?"

The Culture Secretary hit back at these accusations by no one and listed his favourite records as proof of his wide-ranging taste and cerebral superiority to the likes of Shakespeare, Keats and Beethoven.

Chris Smith's Desert Island Choice

- Bohemian Rhapsody by Queen
- YMCA by Village People
- You Were Always On My Mind by The Petshop Boys
- The Best of Shirley Bassey by Shirley Bassey
- It's Raining Men by The Weather Girls
- A Young Person's Guide To Clapham Common *(shurely "The Orchestra"? Ed.)* by Benjamin Britten.

ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev. A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

This week's Newsletter is delighted to reproduce the full text of the historic sermon preached by our vicar on his recent ecumenical visit to our French brethren at St Jacques in Paris.

A. Campbell, Editor.

Bonjour!

C'est moi, Tony Blair de St Albion's en Angleterre.

Comme nous disons dans le nouvel, cool Bretagne, "hi!"

Je veux dire, premièrement, que nos deux pays aient beaucoup en commun.

Par example, nous avons le football! Nous aimons M. Cantona. Ooh ah!

Et aussi il y a le cinéma. Vous avez Gerard Depardieu. Et nous avons Le Full Monté. Magnifique, n'est-ce-pas?

Et il y a le pop music! Nous avons Les Jeunes Filles de Spice. Et vous avez Les Jeunes Filles de Spice aussi!

Regardez! Nous sommes différentes, mais nous sommes la même!

Sérieusement, vous conduisez les voitures à droit. Et en Angleterre nous conduisons à la gauche.

Mais ces termes sont très vieux-fashioned.

Dans le monde vibrant et pivotal d'aujourd'hui, nous avons besoin d'être dans le milieu du chemin. C'est qu'est-ce-que j'ai nommé "the third way". Comme le Bible dit, en les mots de Notre Seigneur, "Je suis la troisième voie, la verité et la vie." (Lettre aux Franglaises, 24.3)

Voila! Ici est mon vision pour la nouvelle Europe.

Sur le one hand, nous sommes différentes.

Mais sur l'autre hand, il faut que nous travailler together.

En France, vous dites "Liberté, égalité, fraternité".

En Angleterre, nous disons "Here we go, here we go, here we go."

Vous voyez?

Quand j'étais un jeune homme, je travaillais à un bar en Paris. Il était très interessant, et les jeunes filles françaises étaient très jolies!

Comme nous disons en Bretagne, "Oo la la". J'aimais la belle France then, et je l'aime encore! Vive La Cool France!

Au revoir, mes amis, et merci beaucoup!

Votre ami,

Antoine.

■ **An English translation of Tony's sermon is available in the vestry from the Churchwarden Mr Mandelson, price £2.50. All proceeds to go to the Millennium Tent Fund.**

Notices

● This year's **Parish Outing** has been switched from Blackpool to Tuscany.

Tony is aware that some older parishioners may be upset by this change of venue. But we have had a lot of complaints in recent years about the low standard of the accommodation in Blackpool. Typical objections have been *"Northern landladies"*, *"all night bingo"*, *"smell of chips"*, *"too many working-class people"*, etc. PM

YOU WRITE...

From Mr Ken Livingstone

Dear Sir,

I would like to register the strongest possible protest at the way certain people on the PCC have been ganging up to try to stop me getting back my old job as verger. I would very much like the chance to serve the people of the parish in this way, and I would like to point out that I am much better qualified than someone like Mrs Jackson of the Amateur Dramatic Society, if her performance as Queen Elizabeth I in last year's production is anything to go by! Just because she is a friend of Tony's, it doesn't mean

Yours sincerely

Ken Livingstone , The Happy Newt , Red Kensington Road.

The Editor reserves the right to shorten all letters due to reasons of space. So don't even think about complaining. **A. Campbell**

FLOWER ROTA

Mrs Harman regrets that she may shortly have to leave the flower rota for personal reasons. The Vicar would like to make it clear that this is not in any way because Mrs Harman's work has been found unsatisfactory. Many thanks to Mr Field for covering for her through what has clearly been a difficult period. TB.

Thought For The Day

As Easter approaches,
our thoughts turn to The Full Monty. Anyone who has seen this wonderful film (which is my favourite!) will know that its message is very much one of hope, renewal, regeneration and, yes, resurrection!

When they strip off their clothes, they remind us that we are all naked in the sight of God! TB.

Who's Sari Now!

Tony and Cherie enjoyed a most enjoyable evening out at the St Albion's Anglo-Asian Rotarian Dinner, hosted by Mr Patel at his restaurant in the High Street, the Frog and Bhaji. He has named a special new curry after Tony, the "Cool Vindaloo".

(Many thanks to all those present for their very generous donations to Church funds, which Mr Brown tells me totalled £56 million!)

Putting The Record Straight...

There has been a certain amount of malicious gossip linking the Vicar with Mr Murdoch, the owner of The Adult Entertainment Centre (Vids and Mags) in the High Street. These reports are completely untrue. And even if they were true, which they aren't, unless Mr murdoch says they are, there would be nothing wrong with the Vicar helping a member of our local business community, which he is bound to do in his role as priest to the whole parish. So, let's hear no more of this one please! The vicar is available to see any parishioner at any time — apply in writing to me enclosing cheque and sae. PM.

Blair's 4-Point Plan to end the Welfare State

by Our New Labour Staff **Dame Edna Beveridge**

MR TONY Blair today unveiled Harriet Harman's radical scheme to implement Frank Field's plans to abolish the welfare state, thus saving Britain £2000 billion a year.

How it will work:

1. Everyone will get a job.

2. This will mean that they don't need welfare any more.

3. Er...

4. That's it.

Ready, Steady, Cook-Up!

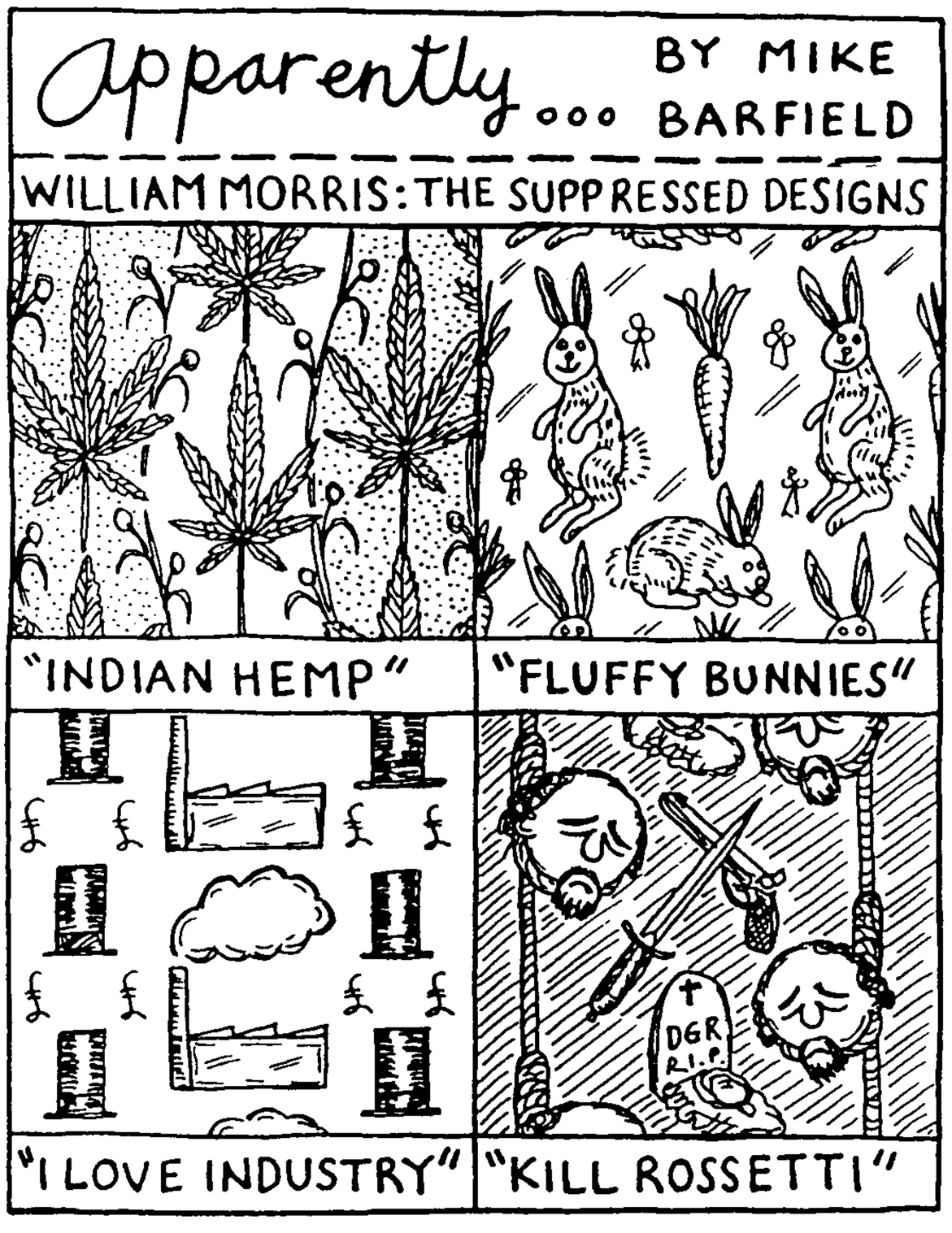
with TV's Robin Cook

Today's Recipe: Palestinian Artichokes

Ingredients: One bucket salt; one old wound.

Directions: Stir everything up and bring blood to the boil.

Tomorrow: Peace Pudding (off)



WORLD'S GREATEST TRAGEDY

—●—

NO BRITISH SURVIVORS IN TITANIC DISASTER

—●—

by Our Man in Hollywood Lunchtime O'Verboard

BRITAIN was in a state of shock last night as news came through that a group of upper-class English-women had all sunk without trace on their journey to America.

Never had a group of actresses in period costume set out from these shores with such high hopes.

Bands had played, Union flags had waved and the *Daily Telegraph* had run enormous articles for days beforehand headed "Confident Predictions of British Successes in Motion Picture Awards", "Watch Out America, The Super-Brits Are Coming" and "Blimey — It's Kate Winsalot!" (pics pages 1, 3, 5, 94).

WOMEN AND CHILDREN LAST

The whole nation followed the progress of the British hopefuls as they headed across the ocean towards the New World.

But then, early in the morning on 23 March, disaster struck.

Out of the darkness loomed the largest and most expensive film ever made.

This was the film which they all said was unsinkable.

But they were wrong. The vast bulk of the Titanic smashed into the British hopefuls, who all disappeared below the waves of the crowd without a murmur.

These poor British women and children will never be heard of again, and experts predict that they will be washed up in a matter of days.

Those who perished included victims from all classes:

FIRST CLASS

Dame Judith Dench O.B.E. Dame Judi liked to dress up in the Crown Jewels and pretend to be Queen Victoria.

Lady Violet Bonham Carter. Lady Helena was connected to the grandest of British families and liked to take off all her clothes.

Lady Kate Winslet, 11. Sweet, innocent child who also liked to take off all her clothes.

STEERAGE

A group of five working-class men, all called **Monty**, who particularly liked to take off all their clothes.

The only British survivor of the disaster was **Miss Anne Dudley**, a little-known musician.

"I could not believe my luck," she said. "When the Titanic struck, I thought it was all over for me.

"But then, miraculously, someone threw me an Oscar to cling to and I somehow managed to scramble out of the wreckage and into the headlines."

LOST

Dame Judith Dench

LOST

Lady Violet Bonham Carter

LOST

Lady Kate Winslet

POETRY CORNER

Lines On The Retirement Of Mr Michael Atherton From The Captaincy of the England Cricket Team (1993-8)

So. Farewell then
Michael Atherton
English cricket captain.
3, 0, 1, 13*, 0.

Those were your scores.

"Oh no, it's slipped
Through Athers's fingers
Again."

That was your
Dropped catch phrase.

E.J. Thribb (17½ not out, after 3 hours)

You Choose The New England Cricket Captain

Should it be

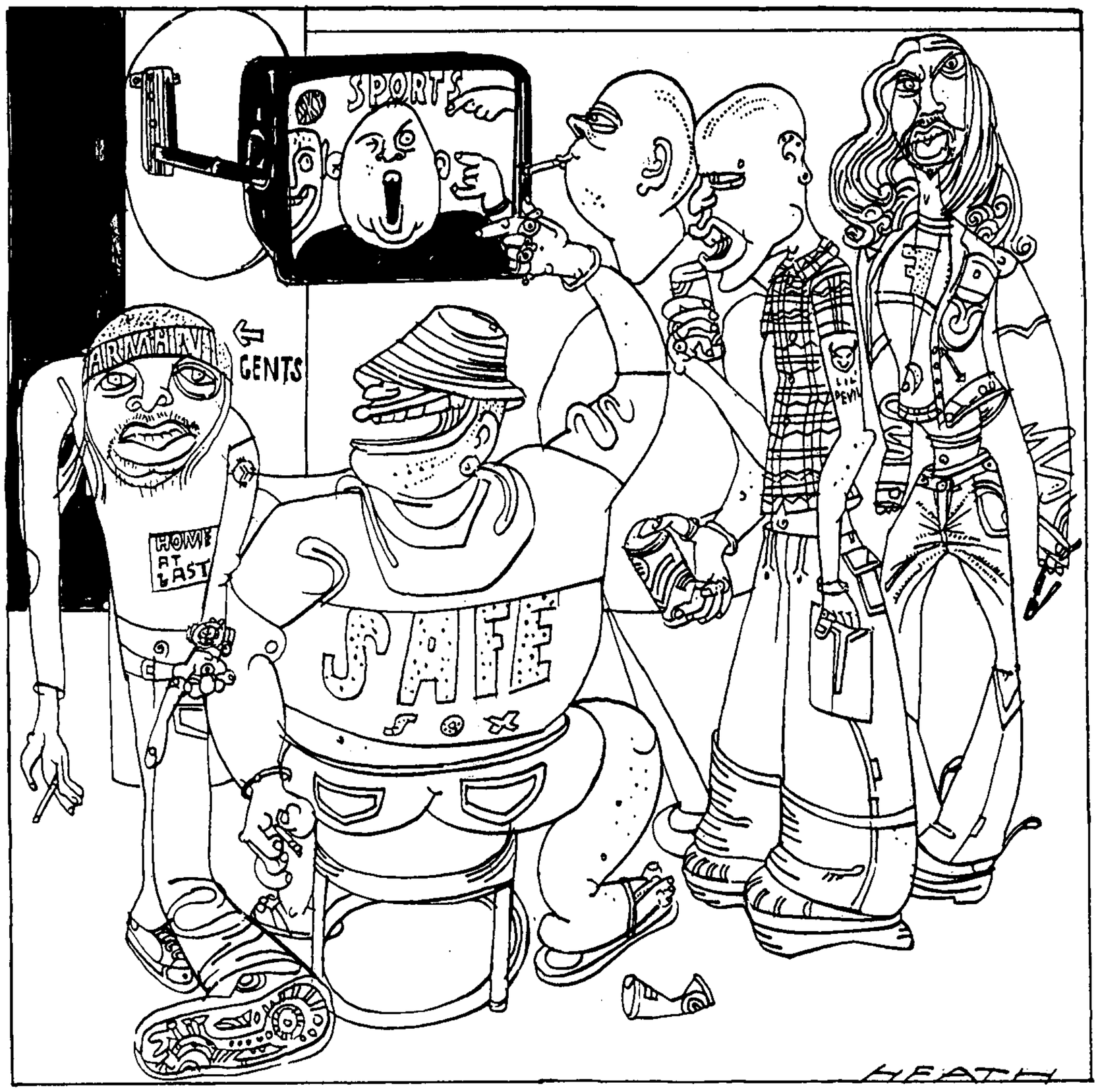
- Goochie?
- Gazza?
- Posh Spice?
- Jeffrey Archer?
- TV's Charles Moore?
- Tony Blair?
- Michael Atherton?

Phone now on the Eye Skipper Hotline 0836-951-01 and play YOUR PART in helping England to lose the next test series.

Late Score

England 25 and 106.
Rumbabwe *(formerly British Rumbabaland)* 610-3 dec.
(Matabele J. 263, Matabele R. 154, Bulawayo X. 104)

Harry Enfield's **Bores** Drawn by **Michael Heath** **33. New Comedy**



"Yeah blimey cor Noel Gallerer he's a short arse wanker har har 'azzee got a squint or izzee permanently pissed har har like me after fooball! Fooball! Oi! Har har gor blimey and ee don't like Tony Blair no more ee finks ee's sold out poor old Tony Blair ee's a wanker! Har har cor blimey I've got a feory about 'im ee's got that look on 'is face 'cos Cheriee's stuffed a pepper pot up 'is arse har har ho ho gor blimey akcherlee it's 'cos Cheriee don't let 'im get pissed and go to the fooball! Fooball! Oi! Har! Ha! Ho! Ho! Gor blimey they wanna spend two millin of that Dome money on buying Gazza for the cabinet to show 'em all how to get pissed and play fooball! Fooball! Oi! Har har! How come the Dome looks like William Hague's head har har ho ho! 'Ee's a bald wanker! Arf arf! Wozzer matterwivim? Eee needs to get 'ome earlier, so 'ee can b-beon Ffion! Har har! Gor blimey. I love shaggin' and fooball! Fooball! Oi! Har har ho ho..."

Celeb

LIGGER

SURE YOU'RE NOT GETTING OUT OF YOUR DEPTH USING A FULL ORCHESTRA AND CONDUCTOR ON YOUR NEW ALBUM?
'COURSE NOT, BARRY.
YOU RECKON YOU KNOW HOW TO HANDLE THOSE CLASSICALLY TRAINED MUSOS? I MEAN, YOU'RE MORE USED TO A ROCK BAND WITH BACKING SINGERS, AREN'T YOU?
I'LL BE TOTALLY IN CONTROL, BAZ.
THEY KNOW WHO'S BOSS ON THIS PROJECT. AT THE END OF THE DAY IT'S ME WHO'LL BE PULLING THE STRINGS...
FANCY COMING BACK TO MY HOTEL ROOM THEN, GIRLS?
OOH RATHER.
RECORDING STUDIO

BLAIRZONE

Yes! It's Britain's Newest Fanzine

Hot Goss

Blairzone bad boy ROBIN THROBBIN' COOK has been thrown out of Israel for being loud-mouthed and outrageous, but Robin denied that he had been in any way offensive. He told waiting reporters "F*** off". What a great ambassador for the cool sound of Britpop!!

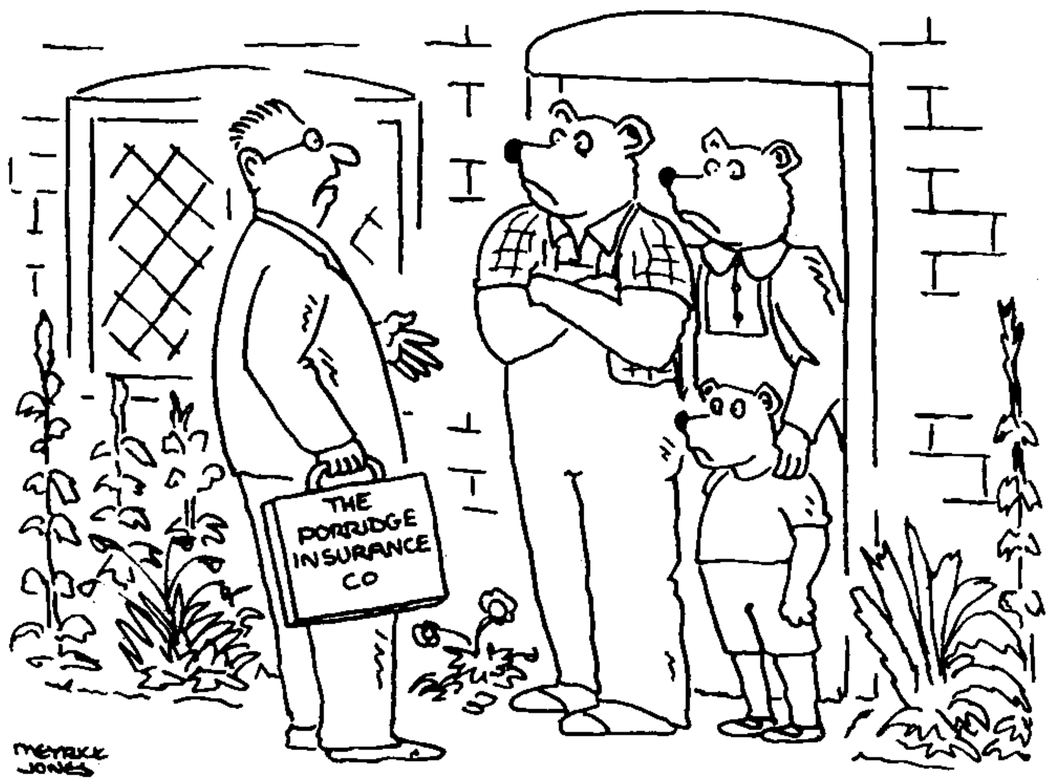
Tone's New Clean Sound

What Tone's making the band listen to on the Tour Bus

- ***Summertime and the living isn't sleazy***
- You ain't nothing but a watchdog
- ***We're all going on a summer holiday with Geoffrey Robinson***

Tone's Thought for a Better Europe

"J'adore le Piat D'Or" — think about it!



"You're making a big mistake — I hope you don't live to regret it"

ALL COUNTRIES MEET THE EURO CONVERGENCE CRITERIA — IT'S OFFICIAL!

by Our EU Staff **Benny Lux**

CHAMPAGNE corks were popping in Brussels last night when it was announced that all 15 countries in the EU had met the very strict conditions laid down for joining the Euro.

Sir Leon Anti-Britten, Vice-President of the European Commission, said: "This gives the lie to all those doubters and Europhobes who claimed that countries like Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Austria. Luxembourg, Holland, Bel-gium, Ireland, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, France and Germany had no chance of qualifying."

Those Really Tough Criteria In Full

1. To qualify for entry, all countries must fill in the appropriate form EC/1998/462, and send it to Mr J. Santer.

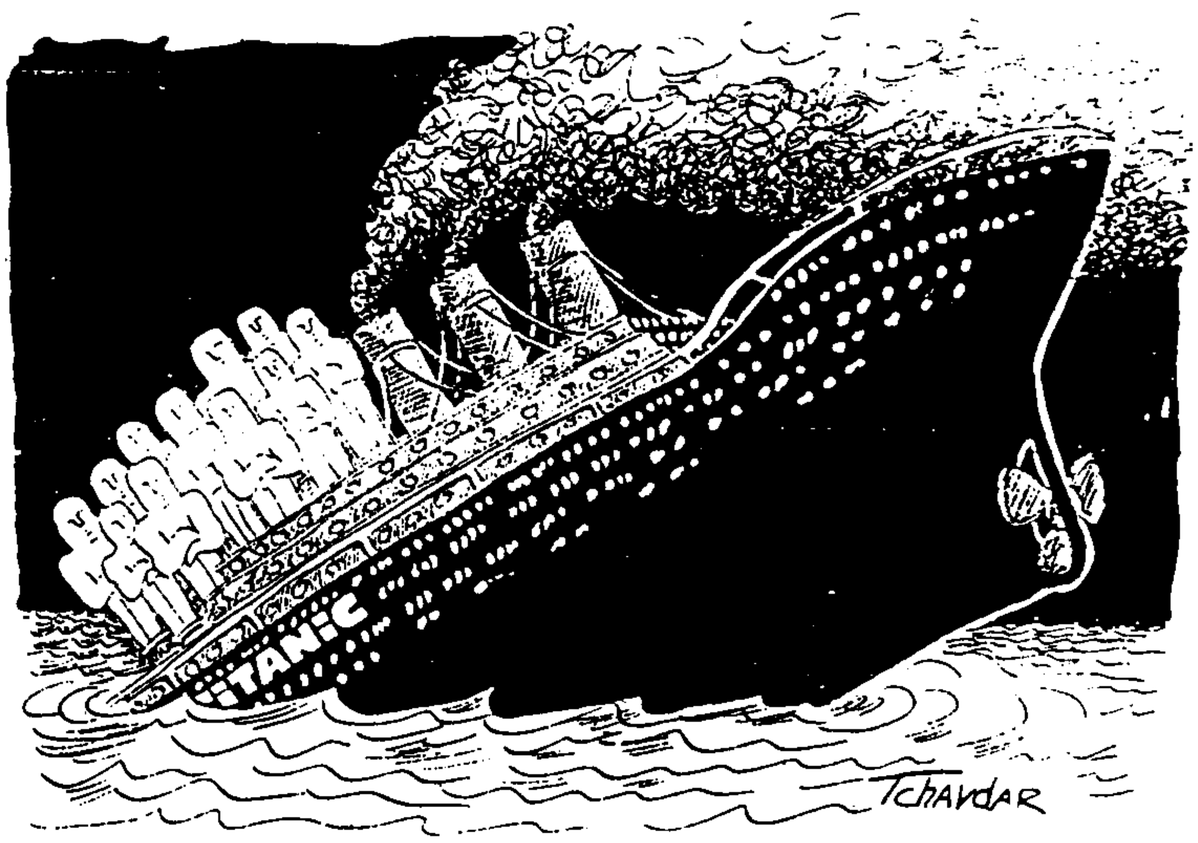
2. All countries must answer the questions on the form to the satisfaction of Mr J. Santer. The questions are:

a) What is the name of your country?

b) Would you like to join the Euro?

3. Er...

4. That's it.



COURT CIRCULAR

VANCOUVER

HIS Royal Highness William, Prince of Hearts, will today put on a silly hat and pose for photographs. He will be joined by his father, the Prince of Charlies, who will engage Prince William in some knockabout humorous banter.

The Prince of Wills will be attended by the Canadian Division of the Royal Groupies, including: Miss Patsy-Lou Moosejaw; Miss Emeline Lumberjack and Miss Daisy-Ann Beavertrap who will scream and present the Prince with items of their underclothing. The Prince will proceed to smile shyly and go red in the face.

CLINTON IN AFRICA

Day 8: President to arrive in Uganda for discussions.

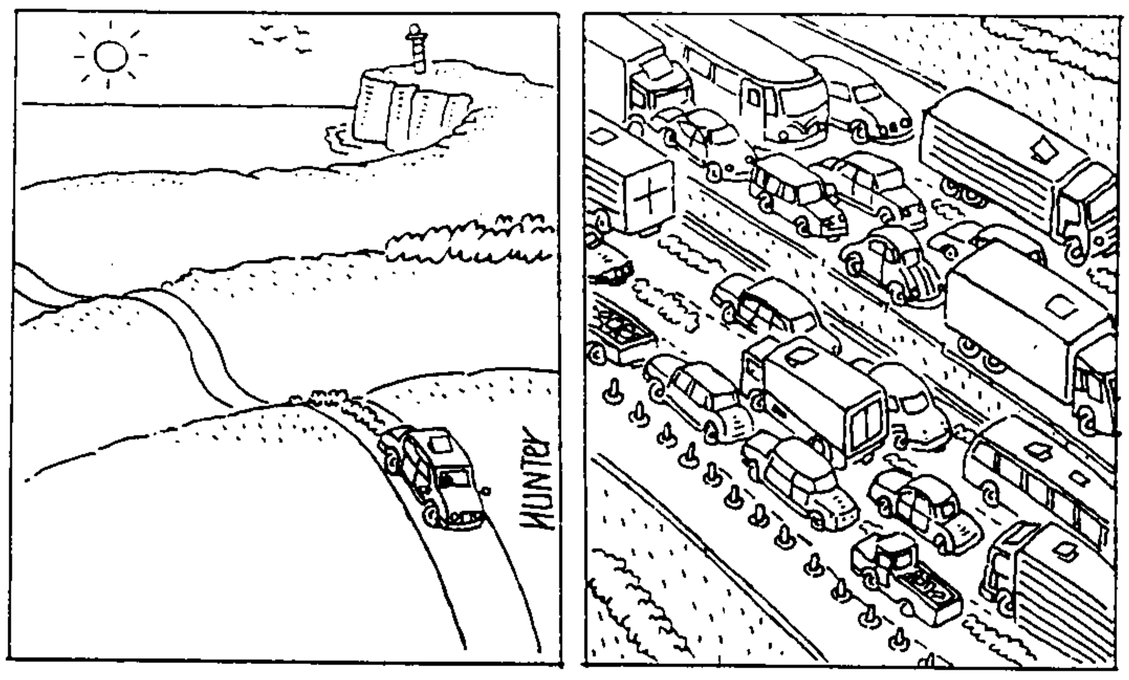
18:00 Visits capital of Legova to meet President Bonko Bonko.

19:00 Visits settlement of Rumpi Pumpi.

20:00 Meets members of Totti Dance Troupe.

21:00 Formal reception with Chief Gobblo of the Wanafaki Tribe.

22:00 President flies undone *(surely 'home'? Ed.)*



SPOT THE CAR ADVERT

New TV Schedules

(Regional Variations for viewers in Northern Ireland)

The Crystal Maze Prison
Groups of four (or six) Irish terrorists run frenetically round E. Wing, attempting to avoid an automatic lock-in and winning extra time by murdering their fellow inmates.

Film: Silence of the Mowlams
Jodie Fosters stars as Mo Mowlam, trying to engage in dialogue with a psychopathic killer or two.

Reps
Docu-soap following a group of republican activists as they struggle to co-ordinate one of the UK's busiest Terrorist Attractions. Followed by "Hotel", docu-soap about life imprisonment in a high-security jail.

Terrortubbies
(That's enough. Ed.)

HOW THEY ARE RELATED

da Vinci **di Caprio**

Direct Descent

Leonardo da Vinci
|
Sir Leon da Brittani
|
Sir Leonardo di Lotteri
|
Sir Lenny da Henry
|
Lady Lena Zavaroni
|
Signor Kipliana (" 'e make exceedingly good Torti")
|
Francis Ford Capri
|
Leonardo di Crapio
(shurely "Caprio"? Ed)

SOCCER

THOSE KNEEGATE TAPES

pp 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7-26 (Bonus page no. 94)

■FOLLOWING the sensational revelations in last week's Eye, we are proud to bring you another instalment of the filthy tapes which illustrate the moral depravity of the men they call "the Sleazebags of Soccer" (Neasden Manager Ron Knee, 59, and his Chairman, Brig. Buffy Cohen).

Posing as a bona-fide Croatian lap-dancer, top *News-of-the-Eye* investigative reporter **E.I. Erewego** trapped the disgusting duo into shock revelations that have rocked Neasden football club to its foundations and forced their shock resignation.

Dressed only in fishnet tights and a gold-lamé tape recorder, our award-winning reporter approached the pornographic pair in the Wayfarer's Lounge Suite of the Novotel in Hammersmith. The following exchanges then took place:

Erewego: Hullo big boys, would you like me to dance on your laps? By the way, I'm a big soccer fan, me. What do you think of Neasden Football Club?

Knee: They are all useless bastards. Except Wally Foot, who is a Goody-Two-Shoes, or rather Goody-One-Shoe, since he only has one leg, ha ha ha!

Cohen: Nice one, Ron, let's have another drink. Over here, Sambo! Three large Armagnacs and put it on the club slate.

Erewego: What do you think of your fans, dearie?

Knee: Well, I wouldn't want to shag that Doris Bonkers. Like all Neasden birds, she's a real dog.

Cohen: And Sid, he's a total moron. What a thick git! He must need his head examined to pay £50 for a season to watch the Squirrels being kicked around the park every Saturday afternoon.

Erewego: Could you speak up a bit, and talk into my right breast?

Knee: Pleasure's mine, darling.

(Tape is muffled for a while)

Erewego: And what about the strip?

Cohen: Yeah, get on with it, get your kit off.

Erewego: No, I mean the away-shirts you keep changing.

Cohen: Yeah, it's a great scam. We ship 'em in from Taiwan. They're made by blind kiddies, 6 years old, we pay 'em 2p a year for 1000 shirts, and we flog 'em for £60 each to lads like young Kevin Bonkers. Can't be bad! I thought you were going to get your kit off, sweetheart.

Erewego: Oh, look at the time. I must be off. I've got... er... a plane to catch, I mean train, er...

(Sound of Knee falling over and throwing up, as hotel pianist Vladimir Rubinstein [Sidney Potts] strikes up with Strangers In The Night *[arranged Potts])*

The News Of The Screws says

What could be more disgusting than ourselves? *(Surely `these two evil men who have dragged the good name of soccer into the gutter'?)*

THE PEOPLE'S PRINCE

by Dame Sylvie Krin

From the best-selling pen that brought you *Born To Be Queen, Heir of Sorrows* and *La Dame Aux Camillas.*

THE STORY SO FAR:
Charles and Camilla are hosting a prestigious "Weekend of Culture and Reflection" at Sandringham.

Now read on...

"THE organic pheasant was delicious, your Majesty." Sir Nicholas Arsota laid down his pearl-handled knife and fork, dabbing his lips with his monogrammed damask napkin.

"I'm so very glad you like it. I shot it myself with my organic gun."

The Prince surveyed his dining table, replete with shining silver, the finest Waldegrave dinner service (given to his great-grandmother by the Archduke Hussey of Pilsen-Holstein), and gleaming goblets filled to the brim with Chateau Poundsbury 1997, Charles's own award-winning Dorset vineyard.

Sandringham had played the host to many a gracious gathering in olden days gone by, thought Charles, but never had it witnessed a scene as glittering as this.

Here, he mused, was the veritable cream of all the finest talents of his realm.

There to his right was the silver-haired Viscount Ipswich, diplomat-turned-art historian, holding forth to the beautiful Lady Carla Interpolizzi, the heiress to the Asda fortune.

"My dear, have you heard the new Oasis album? It's really awfully good..."

And there to Charles's left was the urbane, suave financier Lord Grapes of Rothschild, who had recently intervened to save a priceless Legova sculpture, the Page Three Graces, for the national collection of which he was Chairman.

He was talking earnestly about the problems of the strong pound to the sleeping figure of Camilla Parker-Bowles.

"Hang on," thought Charles, "this isn't right. Surely Camilla should be listening intently to the words of wisdom from the great economic genius."

He gave her a discreet kick on the shins under the table, whereupon she woke up with a start and reached instinctively for her packet of Princess Margaret Full Strength.

"God, this wine's filthy, Charles," she said, lost in a cloud of smoke. "What is it?"

"WHAT is it?" asked Lady Harrods, the venerable, 96 year old architectural historian, as the young musicians of the Tamagotchi String Quartet struck up with an arrangement of the theme tune to The Full Monty.

"It's Vivaldi, I think," Charles replied, "they're awfully good, aren't they?"

At this moment there was a flurry at the doorway, and the butler entered to announce the belated arrival of the chief guest of the weekend.

Everyone craned forward in anticipation. This was the moment they had all been waiting for. Even Lord Ipswich broke off momentarily from recalling some of his favourite lines from the much-admired cartoon series The Simpsons.

"Your Highness, I have the honour to announce the arrival of the Minister Without Portfolio, Mr Peter Mandelson."

And there suddenly in front of them all was the most powerful man in Britain, the master manipulator, the Svengali of Spin, the Prince of Darkness himself.

They all gasped.

"It's frightfully good of you to come," said a beaming Charles. "It doesn't matter at all that you're three hours late. You must be terribly busy, running the country and the government and the Dome thingie."

Ignoring his host, Mandelson strode purposefully to the head of the table, placing on it a large, mysterious cardboard box.

"Talking of the Dome," he said, "I thought you'd all like to be given an exclusive preview of our latest model."

"How incredibly exciting!" said Charles, as the minister revealed a fragile balsa-wood facsimile of the now legendary dome, designed by Lord Rogers of Hammersmith.

Charles's adjective was echoed in a buzz of admiration round the table. "Exciting, exciting, exciting," they all said, from the distinguished Catholic novelist the Hon Piss Poore Read to the famous organic conductor T.S. Eliot Gardener.

Lord Ipswich was so moved that he immediately responded with some carefully-honed impromptu verses:

"There is nothing like a dome
Nothing in the world
No matter where you roam
There is nothing like a dome."

AS THE applause for this spontaneous tribute died away, Charles rose from his chair. "Mr Mandelson, ladies and gentlemen. May I take this opportunity to welcome our honoured guest who has graciously agreed to give us a full six-hour presentation on the Cultural and Spiritual Significance of his Millennium Dome thingie tomorrow evening.

"That will follow our tour of some of our magnificent Norfolk churches, guided by Lady Harrods. We're going to begin with St Candida's, Lycett Green, followed by St Paul's at Johnson-Up-The-Wall and St Melinda's at Messenger, with its incomparable double-rood screen, recently so sensitively restored by Sir Quinlan de Quinlan..."

As Charles warmed to his subject, his guests were so rapt in his monologue that they failed to notice a pall of smoke billowing out from the region of Mr Mandelson's much-prized model.

"Oh, bollocks!" came the unmistakable tones of the Prince's consort. "I seem to have set fire to the bloody ashtray."

Charles's eyes began to water as the acrid fumes engulfed his guests. This was not how it was meant to be...

DIARY

I ain't talkin' my ass outta this shit, no way man. You wanna diary, like you git a diary, no hassle, aright? You seen my latest movie, you seen it? How many times you seen it? It's even better on the seventeenth, aright, no shit.

Like, wodever, the new movie's todally fuckin' different from my other movies, aright, like it's more fuckin' tender and lovin' for one. There's this great tender scene, aright, when this guy like holds a pistol up the nostril of this girl right and he ever so delicately blasts it fuckin' off, great scene, man, nostril all over the fuckin' wall, but — and here's the tender bit, aright — he doesn't blast off the other nostril, he lets her keep it, aright, 'cos he's like completing the learning curve of like coming to terms with himself like and his position in society and his responsibilities as a fellow human being aright? Sal-fuckin-vation, man, no shit.

Like tough titties, man. I ain't gonna take no fuckin' insults, not from you not from any fuckin' body, no way, aright? So when a smartass reviewer from the New York Fuckin' Times says like this latest movie is my best movie yet I turn round and say look you fuckin' fuckass how can you expect me to deal with a fucking statement like that, man, you know what I'm saying, who's gonna put up with that shit, like, is he saying my other two movies weren't so good, is that what he's fuckin' sayin', well, is he? 'Cos if that's what he's fuckin' sayin', I got a problem with that, like, uhuh, so's maybe it is my best fuckin' movie yet, but the other two movies were my best fuckin' movies yet too, no shit. So you take that fuckin' insult back, you cocksuckin' smartass critic, or I'll baadass your brains, motherfucker.

Don't talk to me about morality, man. I got more morality up my fuckin' ass than like you got in your head, man. Moral centre? I got an extremely moral centre, like in Reservoir Dogs — how many times you seen Reservoir Dogs — great ain't it? — like in Reservoir Dogs when the guy with the cattle prod up his ass whips the other guy till the blood spurts out all over the third guy's nice clean shirt and this makes the third guy like so shitass angry, aright, he slices off the first guy's toes with this

QUENTIN TARANTINO
(Certificate 18)

like samurai sword right, so like now if that's not moral aright, you don't know nothing 'bout morality 'cos like the fourth guy, he's somewhere else, he don't do nothing bad, so nothin' bad happens to him, aright, until a whole lot later in the movie when he winds up gettin' castrated by like a food processor or wodever, like it's a kinda Christian, kinda Old Testamenty kinda thingish kinda thing, aright, but *deep*.

I'm not saying I'm better than like Welles and John Ford and David Lean and Kubrick and all that kinda shit, no way man, but like you wanna know what, they didn't know much about movies, that's all I'm saying, no shit, aright? Like that scene in Brief Encounter, where the tweedy cocksucker and the woman are in the Burger King on the station platform or wodever? Well, Lean missed it, man, he totally missed it like NOTHIN' HAPPENS, no redemption, no guns, no nothing. So now I'm usin' the same scene in my next movie, aright, only this time it's like for real and I've retitled the movie Brief Total Fuckup:

OLD WOMAN: Oh Charles! Oh... Charles!

OLD MAN: Oh, Jean! Oh... Jean!

(Cedric bursts into restaurant. Cedric takes out his gun and shoots Old Man three times in the chest, blowing him out of his chair)

OLD WOMAN: Oh, Charles! Oh... Charles!

(Old Woman has shit her pants. Cedric empties his gun on her. Blood shoots out her ears. Cedric picks up her cheese and tomato sandwich. Wipes blood off it with his sleeve, finishes it in two bites)

OLD MAN *(reviving)*: Hggnnn! Hnnnggg!

CEDRIC: Shut your fuckin' mouth, motherfucker!

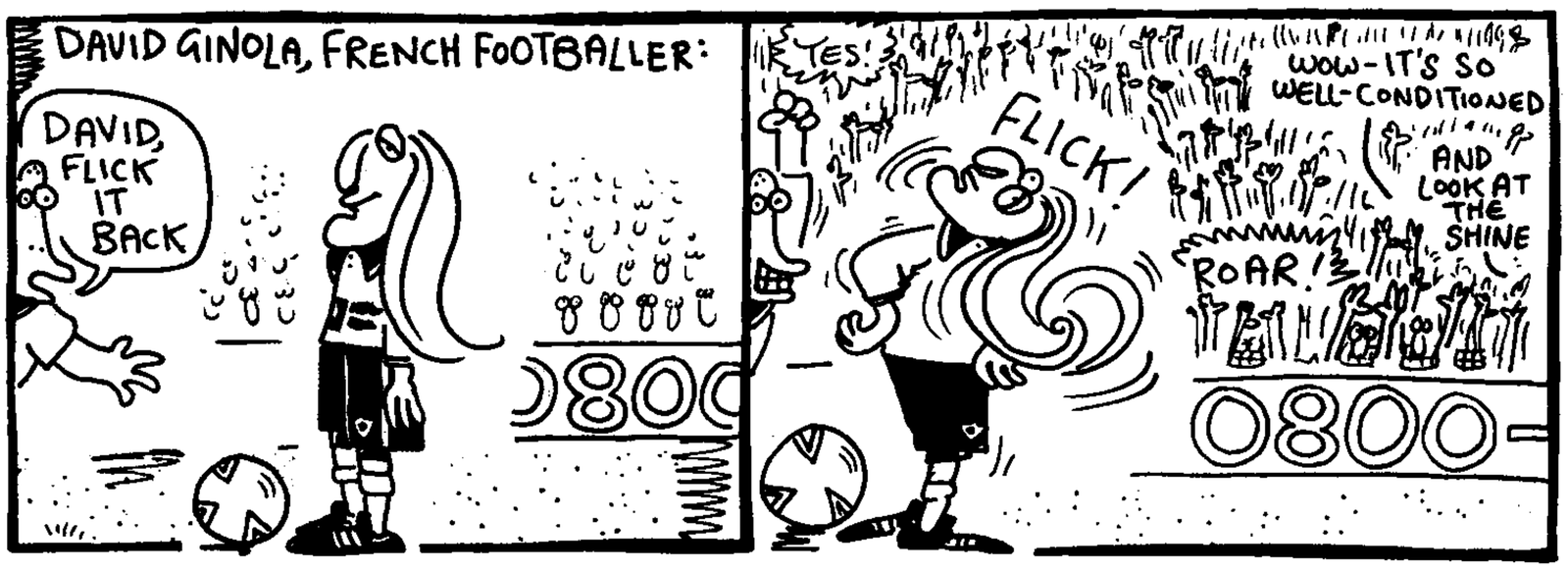
(Cedric whistles "Remember You're a Womble", pulls out pickaxe and bludgeons Old Man to death. Train pulls into station. Cedric boards it and leaves the station a free man)

See what I'm sayin'? Cedric has been redeemed, aright, 'cos he like remembered to wipe the blood off the sandwich before eating it, uhuh, just like his momma always teached him. See, my films are about redemption, and, like I said, I'm a totally and very morally centred human being, aright?

The thing about my movies is like they're just fuckin' great movies, aright, like I don't buy into this whole fuckin' idea that if you show a movie that's like violent you're gonna like get a whole lotta people in a violent-type situation with people's noses being shot off and their hands all crushed like on the ground and holes through their chests aright just because they've been like watching Fred Flintstone or wodever, like real messy. Like my movies, sure they're violent, I like violence in movies, fact I wish there was more, 'cos violence is real not like that Jane Austen Merchant Ivory shit, like Pardon Me, Mr Bennett, says Young Emma, take this you badaass motherfucker, Mr Bennett you and Mrs Bennett ain't talkin' your ass out of this shit, you know what I'm sayin', no way. Hell, I watched 10,000, maybe 100,000 movies since I was a fuckin' teenager but they never made me violent, aright, no way, I said they never made me fuckin' violent or abusive or any of these thingy fuckin' things, did you say something?! So don't say they fuckin' did, man, or I'll blow your fuckin' head off, two, three shots, easy, aright? Get the fuck outta here if you're gonna be like that man — that's no fuckin' way to treat a fuckin' genius type filmmaker artist, uh-uh!

SUPERMODELS

KERBER



Certainly it would give Mr Clinton food for thought as he boards the presidential jet for discussions in Uganda.

Sunday Telegraph

HERE IS the correct version of a correction which appeared incorrectly yesterday:

Grauniad

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Xyxyx xyx xyx yxyxyx xyyxyxyxyx xyx yxyxyx xyxyxyxyxyxyx.Xyxyx xyx xyx yxyxyx xyyxyxyxyx xyx yxyxyx xyx

Xyxyx xyxx, xxyx x, xx

Mail on Sunday

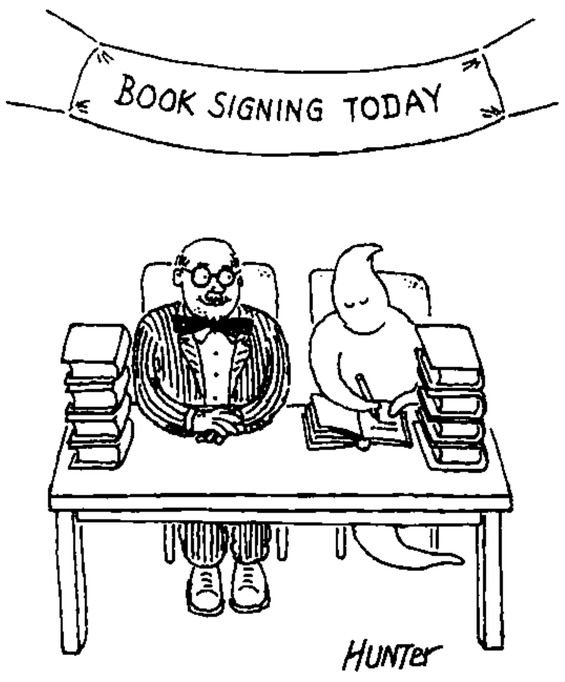
Literary Review

Hell on Earth

Paradise
Toni Morrison
(Chatto, £16.99)

THE main point of reading a book review is that the reviewer has read the book, having had an advance copy, which you haven't yet had a chance to do. So the reviewer doesn't need to be any great hotshot to be able to tell you things you don't know.

With *Paradise*, Toni Morrison's first novel since winning the Nobel prize for literature in 1993, this handy arrangement hasn't been working too well. For *Paradise* is literally unreadable. It's a bugger to get through. Pure torture from, say, page 11 to the end. It is impossible to work out who's who or what's going on and there's no rea-



son to give a toss anyway, to put it mildly. It would be easier to enjoy a work of theology written in a language you don't understand than it is to take pleasure from *Paradise*.

Given Morrison's status, the reviews of *Paradise* were never going to be rude. The poor sods assigned the ghastly task of grappling with this mare's nest found different ways to hint at the horrors they'd endured and the fact that some may not have managed every word. Marianne McDonald, sent all the way to Chicago by the *Observer* magazine to interview Morrison, feebly wrote of the book: "Personally, I don't feel qualified to offer an opinion, partly because I found it so difficult – the storyline is so layered back on itself and the narrators so numerous." In the *Mail on Sunday*, Fay Weldon gave a pretty strong tip that she hadn't managed to force it down either: "Your guess is as good as mine," she airily allowed, as reviewers seldom do, "love it or hate it."

Others suggested similar difficulties in more pompous language, to cover their arses. "Its overlapping stories, its allusive prose and historical range, exert a considerable and at times excessive pressure on the reader," Christopher Bigsby sagely pronounced in the *Telegraph*. In ordinary speech, that means he found it a complete bastard.

In the FT Craig Raine expertly diagnosed "unambiguous unreadability" without disclosing whether or not he had himself overcome it. In the *Observer*, Adam Mars-Jones equally firmly laid the blame with the writer, not the reader: "At some point a writer bursting with her story becomes someone who is unable to let it out." It's a shame he didn't develop the comparison a little further and let us know what happens next to helpless bursters.

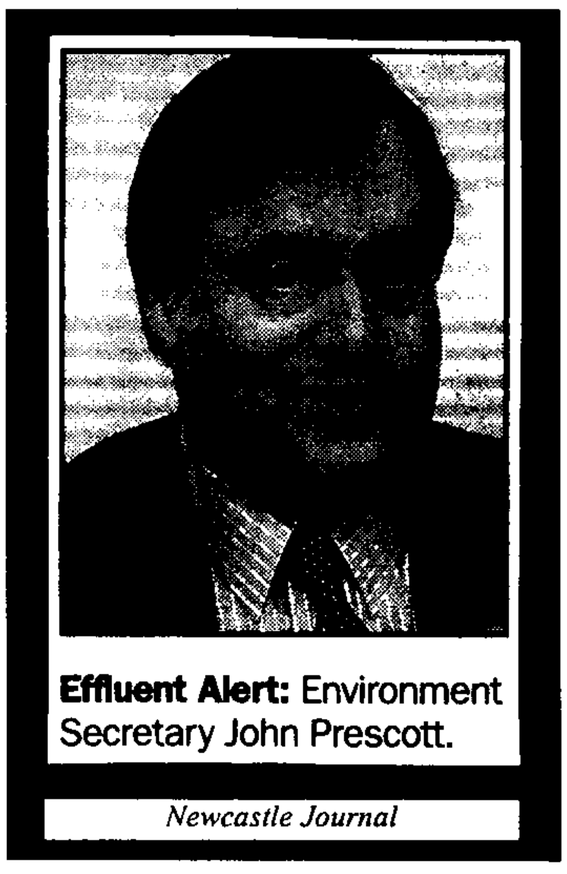
Meanwhile, in the *Sunday Telegraph*, Minette Marrin pulled a fast one. "At first it is extremely difficult to follow what is going on at all – almost irritatingly so," she admitted. But then she added in a cunning piece of oneupmanship: "Much of it is too compressed and only takes on its real shape and a considerable beauty on a second reading, like poetry." A second reading! I myself would say that *Paradise* only takes on its true majesty after a fourth or fifth exploration, like a symphony cycle. If then.

Even if the subject matter of *Paradise* were engaging, its narrative technique is not. It opens with nine men invading a mysterious "Convent" in 1976. "They shoot the white girl first," the novel begins. The rest of the novel goes back in time to examine the stories of all involved in this attack, which is then described again at the end. Unfortunately, it is impossible to tell who's who because the names change and relationships are not explained, just assumed, and the narrative voices switch from chapter to chapter. Nor, although colour is a theme, is colour disclosed.

Even if the narrative technique were engaging, the subject matter is not. It's set in an all-black town, Ruby, created as a paradisiacal enclave in rural Oklahoma. However, Ruby, created by those rejected by others in the past, comes to despise and reject its own marginalised communities – light-skinned blacks, the free-living women in the "Convent", some seventeen miles out of town. The town's patriarchs have become oppressors. "They think they have outfoxed the white man when in fact they imitate him."

Evidently there is no social or psychological reality here – even before the clunky symbols and myth-making have been factored in. Ruby is centred on a ludicrous sacred "oven", brought from a previous settlement, and inscribed with a holy text. The convent is located in a mansion shaped like a bullet, plumbed up with genitally-shaped fittings... You can call this poetry or you can call it stuff and nonsense.

Paradise is yet another of those novels (enjoyed most by Michele Roberts, the William Rees-Mogg of book-reviewing, just go thou and do the opposite) in which every character and action is rhapsodically presented as utterly remarkable and sensational, magical beyond anybody's ken. It is in its way meant to be a mystical text. But a complete bloody mystery, for any reader of normal strength and inclinations, is what it is going to remain.



Effluent Alert: Environment Secretary John Prescott.

Newcastle Journal

"Have a nice Di!"

Diana balls

"Two Young's pubs have new names as a permanent memorial to Diana, Princess of Wales, who worked closely with brewery chairman John Young for years."

— ***Ram*** magazine, house journal of Young's brewery.

"Cafe Diana is the ideal refuge after a thoughtful stroll through Kensington Gardens. Named after that doyenne of therapy, the much-missed Diana Princess of Wales, this catering tribute, unlike shrines to Elvis, has a dignified ambience. The many precious photographs of Diana that illuminate the walls speak volumes of the nation's golden child, Diana, the very essence of compassion, of duty, of style and beauty. That very British girl whose innermost feeling of suffering made her connect with the constituency of the rejected. Over sweet honey and almond Basbusa cake and a reviving glass of Russian tea one could be forgiven for thinking that this welcoming Arabic cafe had an almost celestial quality. As if there were a gentle presence offering tea and sympathy..."

— Restaurant review by Tim Burke in London *Evening Standard* (submitted by Linda Powell).

"I will outline a history of the Diana sign whereby its transition from a magical synthesis of binary oppositions to a focus of argument and inspiration has opened up possibilities for unpacking the knot of meanings around royalty, patriarchy, class, imperialism and ethnicity... popular deconstruction over attempts to stabilise and to appropriate Diana's iconicity according to discourses of positive images."

— Dr Jude Davies, lecturer in cultural studies at Winchester, introducing a conference paper in York.

Greek supermarket

footnotes

FROM TOONGATE TO DONNYGATE (VIA WALKERGATE)

NOT enough attention has been paid to the political associations of Freddy Shepherd and Doug Hall, the chairman and vice (sic) chairman of Newcastle United, who were caught with their pants down and their mouths open in a Spanish brothel.

When he finally decided to resign as United's chairman, Freddy Shepherd, a millionaire property developer, took off for Barbados to recover. Coincidentally, another visitor to Barbados at the same time was a prosperous surveyor from Rossington, near Doncaster, called Malcolm Clark. If Clark and Shepherd bumped into each other on the beach, they would have discovered that they have at least three things in common.

①**Doug Hall.** Both men do substantial business with Shepherd's fellow loudmouth, who is the son of the current chairman of Newcastle United, Sir John Hall.

THE TOONGATE TWO: Shepherd and Hall

2 Property speculation. Malcolm Clark and Doug Hall are directors of Rossington Hall Investments, which is promoting the biggest ever property development in the Doncaster area — a massive scheme for golf courses, houses and shops valued at £200m. Rossington Hall Investments has run up losses of more than half a million pounds since it was incorporated in 1991, but has still managed to fork out £400,000 in consultancy fees to Malcolm Clark's company, Designaim. It survives through the unfailing generosity of its main shareholder, Cameron Hall Developments, the treasure chest of the enormously rich Hall family.

The future of Rossington Hall Investments depends entirely on planning permission for its grandiose development. Doncaster council backs the plan, but most of it was turned down in February last year by a government inspector. Hall, Clark and Co plan to challenge this decision in the courts.

Meanwhile in the north-east, Freddy Shepherd, who is linked to Doug Hall in a network of mainly sporting companies, has got council backing for an extensive and controversial shopping development on industrial land at Walkergate Works in east Newcastle.

3 The Labour Party. Clark and Shepherd and their developments depend very much on *the support of* Labour politicians, who control Doncaster and Newcastle. Malcolm Clark is chairman of the Rossington ward of Doncaster Labour party.

Freddy Shepherd enjoys the company of Labour politicians and does not stint on hospitality for them. In 1996, for instance, he threw open Mitford Hall, his stately home, the former seat of the Mitford family in Northumberland, for a fundraising evening for Labour's £1,000 club (no one allowed in for less than £1,000), addressed by a north-east MP called Tony Blair.

When Labour's film minister Tom Clarke MP went to the north-east last autumn "to assess what the media needs from government", he was flown round in a helicopter supplied by Freddy Shepherd's company, Shepherd Offshore. The film minister's friend, Labour's Commons chief whip Nick Brown MP, is a strong supporter of Shepherd's Walkergate development, which is in his Newcastle East constituency, and has spoken at several meetings in favour of it.

The Labour party recently reorganised its regions to merge the north-east with Yorkshire, so Doncaster and Newcastle are now controlled by the same regional executive. Kevan Jones is a member of that executive and Labour's chief whip on Newcastle council. Like his friend, the other chief whip Nick Brown, Jones is a keen supporter of Freddy Shepherd's Walkergate development. He is also a leading member of the party's corruption inquiry into Doncaster council.

After some unsavoury revelations in the Yorkshire Post, several Labour councillors in Doncaster were suspended from the council's Labour group. One such casualty was Councillor John Quinn, a Rossington ward councillor and a keen supporter of the Hall/Clark development. He was suspended in July, but in November was fully reinstated by Kevan Jones's inquiry without a stain on his character.

To complete the picture, Nick Brown's junior whip in the Commons is Kevin Hughes, MP for Doncaster North. Hughes, a former member of the Communist party, the New Communist party, and the "old" Labour left is now a strong "new" Labour man. His political mentor, Gordon Gallimore, former leader of Doncaster council and chairman of Hughes's constituency party, was the council's strongest supporter of the Rossington development. Mr Gallimore was suspended from the Labour party in December.

THREE WHIPS: Brown, Jones, Hughes

As is clear, Messrs Clark and Shepherd would have had a lot to talk about in the Barbados sun.

COUNTER PAIN: 5
Bowen, Bowen, Gone

■ IN THE desperate hurry to "franchise" (ie privatise) as many post offices as possible before the general election, the financial geniuses at Post Office Counters Ltd knocked off four South East post offices in one go.

In 1996, after the usual public consultation in which the enormous majority of those consulted registered the strongest possible opposition, the crown post offices at Sutton, Waterlooville, Aldershot and Newhaven were franchised. The lucky company which got all four was Mayfair Cards Ltd, which had two directors: Alan Bowen, of Wokingham; and Linden Boyne, of Camberley.

The company's plan was to run post office services in shops which sold greetings cards. The four shops were refitted at considerable expense by another company called Rosegold, whose directors were Janet Bowen, of Wokingham, and Linden Boyne, of Camberley.

From 1994, when it was incorporated, to 1996, Mayfair Cards made a profit of £6,466 on a turnover of £91,000. "If we're going to get involved with a company, of course we do a business check," says Post Office Counters. Mayfair Cards soared through this check and by the end of 1996 was serving the public with stamps, pensions and all the other post office services.

Just over a year later, in January 1998, the company went into liquidation. Somehow, in such a very short time, it had amassed debts of £727,000. The biggest creditor by far was Rosegold, whose £300,000 debt was secured by debenture. None of the other debts was secured — not even the £200,000 owed to Post Office Counters Ltd. A rather sad creditors' meeting in Hove on 29 January was told that there was very little chance of anyone getting their money back.

Mr Bowen blamed his firm's failure on the "uncertainty of the political situation", which is very odd because the franchise was awarded long before Labour took office. The post office dismisses the liquidation as "a fact of commercial life". At great expense and inconvenience, it has been forced to take back control of the four post offices and is running them as public enterprises once again, though the staff and service and shops themselves are quite different. "Our services are completely uninterrupted," says a post office spokeswoman, without a trace of irony.

BOBBY SHAFTED

■ SIR Ronald Hadfield, former chief constable of Nottinghamshire and of the West Midlands, is not best known for his enthusiasm for criticising police officers. So all the more remarkable was his evidence to the Waterhouse tribunal on the investigations in 1986 and 1987 carried out by the head of the North Wales CID, the then Det Chief Supt Gwyn Owen.

Sir Ronald denounced the chief superintendent for a "shallow and sluggish investigation". Owen's reports to the crown prosecution service (CPS) made comments which were "thoroughly inappropriate and lacking in judgement... The fairness and objectivity called for in those circumstances was absent and his comments showed a lack of tolerance and understanding of the witnesses. Above all very serious imputations appear to have been made about the character and motives of Alison Taylor and certain complainants on the basis of little more than instinct."

SEVEN DEADLY SCREWS

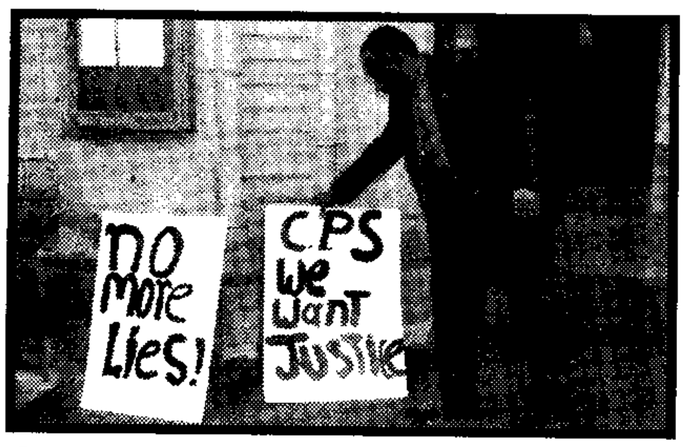
EYE 9 February 1996

footnotes
Bad day at Blakenhurst

STUDY carefully the following home office statement, issued on 9 December in response to ... with the case of Joy Gardner, a police snatch squad tried to ... Ever since 1992, when Alt... with a former...

TWO years ago the *Eye* featured the home office's response to the mysterious death at Blakenhurst prison of Alton Manning, a 33-year-old black man from Birmingham. "Following an assault on a custody officer, Mr Manning was being moved from one part of the prison to another when he became unwell. Medical assistance was called. He was pronounced dead at 21.12 hours."

A heart attack perhaps? A brain haemorrhage? At any rate, a sad and wholly accidental death. The *Eye* asked how Mr Manning's body came



Optimistic demands at the Manning inquest

to be bruised and battered all over; how two post mortem examinations (including one by a home office pathologist) concluded that he had died from "asphyxia from the way he was handled" or "respiratory impairment during restraint"; why inmates from the prison had written to Mr Manning's solicitors to say they saw him shortly before his death surrounded by seven prison officers. There was no reply

Now an inquest jury at Kidderminster has unanimously concluded that Alton Manning was "unlawfully killed". The jury members accepted the overwhelming evidence that the dead prisoner was held in an arm lock so tight that he couldn't breathe. Seven officers at Blakenhurst have been suspended pending further inquiries.

The inquest lasted four weeks. Much of the delay was caused by the home office questioning the legality of demands of the Manning family's lawyer for an unlawful killing verdict. The hearing was adjourned while the issue was taken to the court of appeal, which decided in favour of the Manning family.

NB: In October 1994, just over a year before Alton Manning was strangled to death, an important report was circulated on Britain's privatised prisons. At Blakenhurst, it stated: "Since it opened, Blakenhurst has suffered a catalogue of disturbances... On 24 February 1994 control was lost in some part of the prison and 61 prisoners had to be transferred to other prisons... Recorded assaults were far higher than at any state prison in England in Wales — 73 against a prison service average of 11." The report was entitled PRIVATISING PRISONS; A DANGEROUS DIVERSION. It was published by the Labour party. Its author was Joan Ruddock MP, then shadow home affairs minister.

On the first page she declared: "Labour is fundamentally opposed to prison privatisation." Joan Ruddock is now fundamentally a Minister in the Labour government... which has just commissioned a whole new batch of private prisons (see last *Eye*).

FIDDLERS THREE

■ THREE big insurance firms, Prudential, Standard Life and Norwich Union, have sent a joint submission to pensions minister John Denham demanding compulsory pensions. The government, they say, should pass a law forcing millions of people to take out pensions with big insurance companies like, well, the Prudential, Standard Life and Norwich Union.

Ten years ago the same companies were all demanding that the government make pensions more private, more voluntary, more free. The government obliged with an act which bribed people with national insurance concessions to buy private pensions. A huge wave of salespeople swarmed over Britain persuading unsuspecting people to take the bribe and buy pensions from, you know, the likes of Prudential, Standard Life and Norwich Union.

Oh dear. Almost every sale made the wretched buyer worse off than before. About a million people were swindled out of about two billion pounds by the likes of... Prudential, Standard Life and Norwich Union. For four years now government and regulators have been trying to persuade the companies to pay back the money they swindled. How are they getting on?

By last November, yet another "final deadline":

- The Prudential had compensated 14,292 of the 70,800 swindled customers (20 percent).
- Standard Life had compensated 1,225 of its 6,523 swindled customers (19 percent).
- Norwich Union had compensated 1,196 of its 7,081 swindled customers (17 percent).

The great advantage of "new" Labour compulsory pensions is that people won't have to be persuaded to be swindled any more. Next time they can be forced to be swindled. And the only recognisable beneficiaries will be the directors and shareholders of — you guessed it — Prudential, Standard Life and the Norwich Union.

A hundred grand goes West

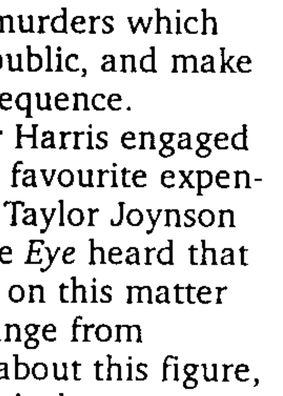
■ WHAT has happened to the estate of mass murderer Fred West, so carefully supervised by the official solicitor, Peter Harris?

The murder house has been sold for £40,000. However, as was widely reported a year ago (see *Eye* 915), Mr Harris has been working hard to increase the value of the estate by selling the "intellectual property rights", including the records of police interviews and other juicy details about the Cromwell Street murders which might excite the public, and make a few bob in consequence.

To this end Mr Harris engaged the services of his favourite expensive City lawyers, Taylor Joynson Garrett (TJG). The *Eye* heard that the firm's charges on this matter have left little change from £100,000. Asked about this figure, the lord chancellor's department replied as follows: "The fees paid to TJG are a private matter... It is true to say, however, that the fees were substantial because of the amount of work involved and the specialist nature of the advice and services provided.

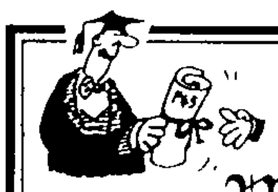
"One of the main reasons for the amount of work was the vigorous efforts which had to be made to protect the value of the estate in the face of intense media pressure. For example, the editors of all national daily papers, as well as radio and TV stations, had to be warned that steps would be taken to protect the estate's copyright."

Despite these heavy costs, however, the department still insists that the estate is "solvent" and that "none of the costs of administering the estate will ultimately fall on the taxpayer".



FRED WEST

Asked whether any money had been paid to beneficaries, the spokesman explained that that answer too was confidential.



High Principals

TRAVEL NEWS

❶ Margaret Murdin, principal of Wigan and Leigh College, has recently returned from a trip to Singapore, Malaysia and India. In Singapore she attended a prizegiving and in Malaysia she visited two colleges.

She had not been to these parts since March last year when she again attended a prizegiving in Singapore and an awards ceremony in Malaysia.

In India she was joined by the chairman of the college governors, Mr Stephen Timms, the chairman of Carefree Cars. Mr Timms "wanted to be reassured about the quality of the provision and delivery and financial probity of the In dian business". The Indian operation, according to Mrs Murdin, "is the most exciting business development with which the college is currently involved". The cost of these visits are "built into the fees we charge our overseas partners".

❷ TERRY ASHURST, an *Eye* favourite and principal of Doncaster College, has just come back from Trinidad where he flew with his college's "explosives expert", Julian Cleeton, on 15 March.

Their mission was "to put the finishing touches to an agreement which will allow quarrying students to learn their skills in the islands, assisted by the University of the West Indies, with Doncaster College providing the practical teaching and the distance learning materials".

APU — A PRESS UNFETTERED

APEX, the organ of the students' union at Anglia Polytechnic University (APU), publishes this curious item, under the heading UNIVERSITY STRONG ARMS THE STUDENTS UNION.

"It was the intention of the Apex editorial team to publish in this issue for your enjoyment and information a number of articles which have found their way into *Private Eye* and the *Times Higher Educational Supplement*. Unfortunately for us and you, we were warned by the university that if we publish these articles, or any similar, legal action will be taken against us. Not being fat cats like the university we had to bow to their will. Nothing can stop you from going out and finding them though. They make quite interesting reading".

In the City

YOU can't keep a bad man or a bad idea down. As further proof of one of the iron laws of investment, witness the sudden reappearance, in the wake of the millions lost in single malt whisky and millennium champagne, of vintage claret as the latest wallet-thinning scheme.

Not surprisingly this offer comes from some of the very people who brought you those other recent retro scams.

Investing in claret — like whisky — had its previous life during the boom years of the early 70s. But within a year it left a taste worse than east European Chateau Headache when prices collapsed. But that was all a long, long time ago; and in the booming 90s memories do not so much fade as fail to exist in a world where five years is a lifetime for those hot to trot and with money to burn in pursuit of the big winner. As whisky worked so well a second time around, why not wine?

Enter the "House of Lonhroes", which has absolutely nothing to do with the house of Lonrho that "Tiny" Rowland built and everything to do with a two-year-old company, Lonhroes International, operating from an accommodation address in Bayswater but with salesmen fishing for fools from offices in Oxford Street and Amsterdam.

By a remarkable coincidence Lewis Daulby, one of the founders of the now closed Gibraltar-based Hamilton Spirit Management — and before that Cavendish Wine, whisky sellers Pearldene and brokers Fox Milton (all RIP and unlamented, other than by creditors) — would seem not to be unknown to the switchboards at both offices. Curiously, the salesmen deny that anyone of that name works there! Hardly surprising: Daulby and others were arrested and released on police bail last November as part of the Serious Farce Office investigation of Hamilton and other whisky scams. There are also suspected links to those formerly behind Napier Spirit Company, closed down by the Department of Timidity & Inaction in December 1996.

The Lonhroes mailshot is clever. Three pages full of greed-whetting promises of "potential returns of up to 1,580%" and of £5,000 turning into £80,000 in six years. Furthermore risks are "minimised" by something called the "partnership guarantee programme" which "guarantees" all your money back if you fail to make a profit. Three satisfied but anonymous clients report profits of up to 136 percent in months.

Interestingly, in all this flim-flam nowhere does it actually say what it is that will produce this cashcade. To find that out you need to send off for your "free information pack" which it is promised will not be followed by "any heavy handed sales techniques". However, in order to obtain the "free information" you need to supply all and any telephone numbers so that the non-heavy handed salesmen can pester you night and day.

The only clue to what they will be selling is contained on the freepost reply envelope — "Investing in Wine, The House of Lonhroes". It turns out the firm is hustling clarets at huge mark-ups, including some well-known names at four-figure prices which could be bought for low three figures at reputable wine merchants.

But those whose eyesight is not glazed by talk of potential returns up to 1,580% should be warned off by two less prominently displayed admissions at the very end of the Lonhroes brochure designed to save those behind the company from legal comeback.

Remarkable Admission One: "No reliance must be placed on this advertisement or any other promotional material produced by the company or any statement made by any representative or agent of the company." In other words, if you are taken in, more fool you and don't think you can claim you were deceived! Unremarkable Admission Two: "Readers are advised that Lonhroes International has no association whatsoever with Lonrho and no inference should be drawn from the similarity between the name." Purely accidental — honest, gov. Not in any way an attempt at what is known in the con game as "passing off".

Back in 1974 the man behind the biggest vintage claret selling company, London Wine, declared after its collapse: "The wine investment bubble is burst — but it will probably come again." How true. Equally true is the answer to the question posed by the Lonhroes' brochure — "Have you ever wondered why some people make better investment decisions than others?" By avoiding scams like "The House of Lonhroes".

EVERYBODY needs somebody to look down on, so when it comes to investor protection the under-regulated alternative investment market (AIM) can point to the barely regulated OFEX, the kerb market run by brokers J.P. Jenkins.

Here, as with AIM, words, especially when they are contained in a prospectus, do not always mean the same as they do anywhere else. Take the recent OFEX listing for nightclub and restaurant chain K-bar which excited the *Sunset Times* so much it gave the group not one but two puffs in its *Business* and *Style* sections, gushing over the exciting thirtysomethings behind the company and the starry clientele of its Kartouche restaurant such as Jemima Khan and Tara Palmer-Tomkinson. The key man behind K-bar is "society entrepreneur" Piers Adam, well known on the club circuit.

The K-bar prospectus was sponsored by brokers MacArthur & Co and underwritten by Charles Church Trust, but the contents are the responsibility of the directors who assured potential investors "the information contained in this document is in accordance with the facts and does not omit anything likely to affect the import of such information".

However, the full picture regarding Piers Adam's business career is not reflected in the K-bar prospectus. Adam helpfully admits that he has been the director of four companies which have collapsed. Furthermore, three of these failures came within the last six months!

Phelps Adam was voluntarily wound-up as insolvent last November. The deficiency was £16,000, mostly to the taxman. Kassoulet Restaurant (Notting Hill), a subsidiary of Kartouche Group, was wound-up last September with debts of £551,000 and no assets. Trade creditors lost £132,000 and the VAT/taxman £52,000. Kassoulet Basement (Notting Hill) went under days before for another £56,000. The other big losers were the parent company.

All three companies are mentioned in the prospectus as having failed but without any financial details or how recent was their demise. But Adam does not mention the collapse of two other companies of which he admits to having been a director, perhaps because they were before last year and after he resigned.

"Play some sad redundancy type music, Manuel"

Adam was a director of Key Organisation, previously SW One, and involved in running a club of that name in Victoria Street. This company was wound up by a creditor in November 1992. Another company connected with the club, Baseincome, was a major client of Phelps Adam — although Adam was not a director. Baseincome was wound up by Customs & Excise in 1994 owing Phelps Adam £28,000. In between Adam was also a director of Venus Leisure which was wound up in 1993 by Westminster council for non-payment of rates. No wonder Adam admitted to the *Sunset Times* that he had "failed business studies at school and doesn't really like dealing with finances and the bank."

WORLD heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis's boxing earnings may have reached $50m after his latest blast out of Shannon Briggs, but the accounts of his promoter Panos Eliades' company Panix Promotions, which receives up to 25 percent of his purses, are still in the red.

Panix's abbreviated accounts for the year to February 1997 showed another net loss of up to £125,000. The company owed creditors more than £2.3m, a rise of almost £1m, and was owed £1.5m. And once again the auditors qualified the accounts because of the lack of "third party confirmations" of payments. A somewhat unusual omission, it might be thought, for a business dealing in such large numbers. Doubtless all necessary confirmations are available to such interested parties at the Inland Revenue and the Customs & Excise should they have any queries — which is most unlikely as Eliades is an accountant.

BAe chief executive Sir Dick Evans has a new best friend in the shape of rabid rightwinger and former bankrupt David Hart, who has been brought on board to help push the Eurofighter project.

Hart's appointment has surprised those who recall how, when he was a private adviser at the MoD, he was busy lobbying his Tory pals Michael Portillo and Malcolm Rifkind to drop the Eurofighter and lease American-built fighters for the RAF.

Exactly what Hart brings to the sales pitch is less than clear, but then ace salesman Evans must know best given his expertise in handling arms sales, especially in the Middle East, where the Eurofighter is bidding against Hart's American friends. They are also likely to be the main competition in any sales to Indonesia, Malaysia and Australia. All very strange.

'Slicker'

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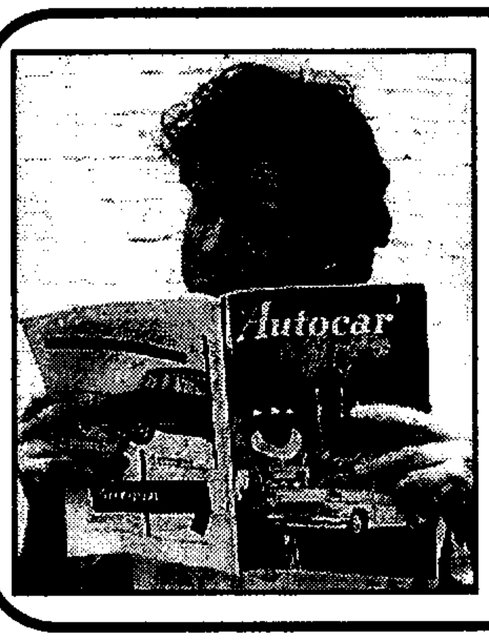

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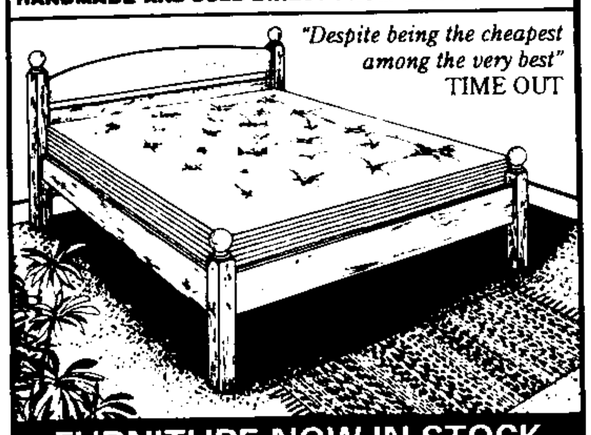

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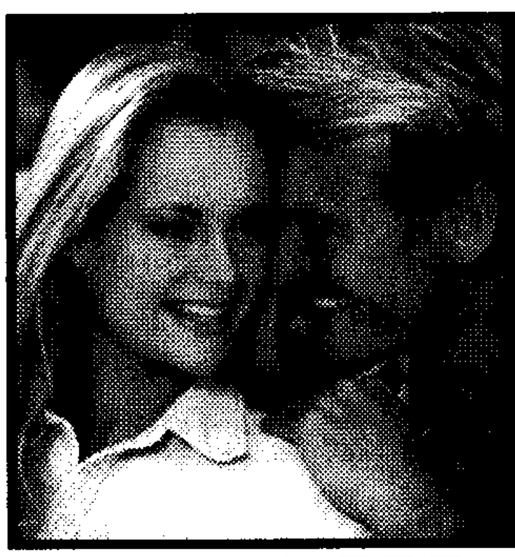

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EYE LET

PORT APPIN, ARGYLL – architect designed lochside bungalow with stunning panoramic views. Sleeps 6/8. For brochure call 01342 870701.

LISTED HOLIDAY COTTAGE – Glastonbury TOWN CENTRE. Sleeps 3. Brochure: 01234 211606.

EYE NEED

COWBOY WANTS NEW BOOTS – 11-04-15 00006330.

STUDENT REQUIRES £5000 to clear debts. Sort-code 40-34-18 A/c 41898604. THANKS.

100% MORTGAGE (£44K) urgently required. "Difficult case". If you can help I will pay you £1000 on completion. Any A.P.R. considered – 0161 485 7544.

MANAGEMENT STUDENT (Edinburgh University) needs help with rent arrears. LEVI: 0131 229 6813. Halifax 11-00-89 00081106.

HELP
NEEDED
WITH PATENT
20-46-57
60659541

DESPERATE – £20K urgently required to repay failed business loan – will lose children, husband and house. Will repay when possible. THANKS. Barclays 20-68-10 30480886 or Box 0347

FLIGHTLESS KIWI not seen home for 3 long years — £500 needed. Barclays 20-94-48 80399949.

REDUNDANCY HIT DAD — desperately wants special surprise 18th party for caring only daughter. Barclays 209921 40422290. Grateful thanks.

TITANIC DEBTS
S.O.S.!
Barclays 20-17-19 30224782.

LIFETIME OPPRORTUNITY gap year. Need £1500. Eternally grateful. Any help. NatWest 51-50-01 87621908.

HUSBAND LEFT ME with 4 children and £8,000 debts. Working hard but can't make ends meet. Anything appreciated. T.S.B. 776606 44332168.

YOUNG GIRL IN DIRE situation, desperate and suicidal. Genuinely needs help. Anything appreciated. Nationwide 0489/2581-600061.

FAMILY MAN IN NEED of help to pay crippling loans. Box 0447.

DESPERATE WOMAN needs £8,000 any contributions accepted ABBEY NATIONAL X6853687 HOG — Thankyou.

FUNDS WANTED - £15,000 required for import/export business, will pay back £25,000 in six weeks. Free details: Call 0181 671 2219 (24hrs).

FAMILY DISASTER - need loan of 16K, willing to pay back, lousy credit rating!! But honest. Please help: Box 2147.

DISTRESSED YOUNG female. £8,000 debt, low income. T.B.S. 77-67-02 25087260. THANKS.

62 YEARS OLD with mother late stages of Alzheimer's, husband gone, desperately need £10,000 or lose home. Please, please, please. LLOYDS 30-96-31 1749350.

GOOD GUY NEEDS HELP to fight masonic influence abuser - please. First Direct 40-47-80 A/c 40595365.

EX-RAF MOUNTAIN RESCUE
now depressed and
disillusioned - needs donations
(however small) to fulfil
lifelong ambition.
Please help.
LLOYDS 30-00-05,
2879755.

URGENTLY NEEDED — £14,000 to fund private purchase of 12-acre woodland conservation site of special scientific interest. Genuine. Box 2145.

BEER MONEY — Box 0241.

DROWNING IN THE SEWERS of debt city. Please help us. NATIONWIDE *07-01-16 09763663*.

THEATRE COMPANY desperate for funding. Need £3000 by May. Details: 0171 247 9255.

SINGLE PARENT with three part-time jobs and disabled child. DESPERATE. Abbey National 09-01-26 0955094.

'BOB' NEEDS political donations and beer vouchers. Box 2247.

PLEASE HELP REJECTED person for marriage 7 times because of paedophile abuse — debts due to hurt, abuse from the age of 7 to the age of 14. Donations to help appreciated: £30K, Barclays 20-92-60, 30996971. I am married to the wrong man the ladies admit if they could show more empathy and understanding the book "MAKING YOUR FAMILY HAPPY" would have made us the right person for each other. Box 2146 if you like the publication.

EYE MOVES

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The Child Support Agency?
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PO Box 205,
Cheltenham, Glos. GL51 0YL.

hhtp://www.orionparty.org Initial policies on the net and more to come. This is getting Sirius!!!

EYE WORK

IMMEDIATELY AVAILABLE - likeable woman will read aloud to elderly or blind person and housekeep and cook for 2 months. Live-in plus reasonable wage. 01653 628373

LIVE-IN GOLF TUTOR for the summer. Gardener, decorator, cook, driver, escort. Scotsman aged 58. Box 2347.

ENGLISH HAUSFRAU resident in Switzerland seeks employment. Anything interesting yet legal considered. Box 3437.

ROGUE MALE — ex-army officer — seeks unusual problems to tackle. Anything moral or vaguely legal considered. Box 2045.

PLASTIC INJECTION MOULD tool maker - fully skilled and highly experienced, seeks interesting and lucrative opportunity. Anything, anywhere considered. Box 1245.

EYE BUYS

EYES FROM 1969 to 1991 (1990 missing) — Offers: 01252 860521.

ALMOST COMPLETE collection of Eyes 1966-1976. Offers. Details: 01794 516923.

EYE CARE

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PROSTATE PROBLEMS? Try PROSLAN — all herbal plant derivatives. 01226 771325.

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VIR CLINICS on 0800 163861
(featured in Sunday Mirror).

CONSULTANT HYPNOTHERAPIST Harley Street — Stress, panic attacks, eating disorders, confidence, sexual problems, smoking etc. Telephone: JESSICA RICHARDS 0171 935 0023.

WEIGHT PROBLEM? Try LIPOLEAN — all herbal plant derivatives. 01226 771325.

NEED MORE ENERGY? Try FORMULA POWER — all herbal plant derivatives. 01226 771325.

EYE CONTACT

FREE UK SINGLES magazine. Dept PE, Spot On, Castle Street, Dornoch, IV25 3SN. Tel: 01862 811195. Fax: 01862 811600.

LOCAL AND NATIONWIDE contacts for singles and couples. Have fun - meet other fun-seekers. Telephone: 01582 750947.

CONTACT MAG for adults: over 900 photos. APPROVAL copy from: MATCHMAKER, (S.76), Chorley, PR7 4BSS. Or ring: 01257 480155 (24 hours).

THAI CONNECTION — established 9 years. Over 400 marriages. WAIA approved. Free colour brochure: 01582 481725.

HEDONISM — parties, clubnights, holidays. Decadent, uninhibited, exhibitionist, fun-loving party animals. Singles, couples. S.a.e. PO Box 153, Greenford, UB6 8LY. 0181 575 2052.

PERSON TO PERSON — best singles magazine for friends/partners, U.K. or overseas. Free details (Dept PE/8) P.O. Box 4, Goring-on-Thames, RG8 9DN.

BEAUTIFUL THAI LADIES — colour brochure SIAM INTRODUCTIONS — 01689 860880.

MARGARET'S SPECIAL Pen Club — make new friends today UK & overseas. SAE details: PO Box 1, Prestwick, Ayrshire KA9 1RJ. Est. 1986.

ADDITIONS — nationwide newsletter — Attached? Yet need a friend? — 0181 905 3304, 0181 958 9657 — total discretion assured. Featured on ITV, American TV, BBC, Radios 4/5. Established 1992.

"PICTURE DATING ... is brilliant!" Capital Radio. Photo-introductions — successful service for professional people, established 1990 — 0171 839 8884. Also: RUSSIAN BRIDES — 0171 839 8884.

PLUMP PARTNERS — National Dating Agency. If you are plump or prefer a plump partner — ring 01352 715909.

CONTACT MAG for adults — over 900 photos. APPROVAL copy from: MATCHMAKER (S.76), Chorley PR7 4BS. Or ring: 01257 480155 (24 hours).

YOUNG LADIES worldwide seeks penpals, friends, lifemates. Free details, photos! HERMES, Box 610188/S, 10922 Berlin, Germany. Fax: 0049 30 25299775.

ASIAN/EUROPEAN marriage — introduction guaranteed. SUMAN MARRIAGE BUREAU, established 1972. Telephone 0181 574 4867.

AstroMatch — 0500820283.

ATTACHED? Seeking romance? LOVING LINKS is Europe's leading quality discreet dating service. Call DAVID for a friendly chat on 0181 962 6300/0171 460 7486. Featured on TV, Radio and National/Intl Press. www.lovinglinks.co.uk

CLUB RUSSIA — beautiful women — correspondence — holidays. BANGOR LL57 2HF. Tel (01248) 355640.

INTERESTED IN nice penpals? World-wide? Info: GLOBAL PENFRIENDS SERVICE, Blumenstr. 44, 70182 Stuttgart, Germany.

EYE SOLDIER

CHEEKY ARMY OFFICER seeks cheeky lady for correspondence while in Bosnia. Box 1747.

EYE LOVE

WARM, SENSITIVE PROF. male, young sixties, g.s.o.h. southeast London, enjoys arts, walking, talking, good food, wine, comfortably tied to recluse, seeks busty woman friend/lover for discreet but worthwhile relationship. Box 1247.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 25, tall, attractive, seeks intelligent and caring female to share life. WLTM. Lincs. Box 0645.

FADINGLY HANDSOME good bloke, g.s.o.h., good heart, good intentions – seeks pretty 30's woman, intelligent and not mad. Chester. Photo appreciated. Box 0747.

GRADUATE, 25, seeks Mrs Robinson for occasional liaisons. London. Box 0947.

JADED GENTLEMAN seeks lady for discreet relationship. West Midlands. Box 2747.

WESTCOUNTRY PROFESSIONAL man, 45, single, fit, living in beautiful part of Exmoor, seeks honest down to earth woman for romantic liaisons/fun and possibly travel. Photo appreciated. Box 1047.

ATTRACTIVE LATE-FORTIES professional man, married, educated, solvent, with GSOH, would like to meet married lady for discreet friendship. London and SE. Box 0847.

FASCINATING, INTELLIGENT, prosperous man desires attractive, well-educated, London woman in her 20's for romance. Box 1147.

LOVING, EDUCATED MAN, 50-ish, wltm loving woman, race, creed immaterial, for lasting relationship. Box 1347.

INTELLIGENT, 42 YEAR OLD professional Englishman, tall, presentable, own hair/teeth, desires discreet, mainly daytime liaisons with intelligent, affectionate lady (40-60) for good conversation, fund, frolics and lovemaking (W.London/Midd'x). Box 1547.

SINGLE, ATTRACTIVE, slim, discrete, non-smoking male, 32, WLTM attractive married lady – age unimportant – for daytime/nightime liaisons. Merseyside. Box 1647.

MAN, 40s, OWN SMALL ARTS BUSINESS,
5'8", 10½ stone –
seeks slim, bright lady
as partner.
Yorkshire. Box 2647.

PROFESSIONAL MALE 55 seeks slim, sensual lady for mutually discreet afternoon tea and passion. Oxfordshire/Cotswolds. Box 2547.

IT COULD BE YOU!! Friendly chap, 45 (attached-ish) seeking "nice lass" – 30/plus, petite, sexy, warm-hearted, g.s.o.h., AND next week's lottery numbers!?? S/West. Box 2847.

SINGLE MAN, 35, shy, intelligent, seeks naughty but nice older woman for fun and friendship. London. Box 2947.

ELDERLY OXFORD GENTLEMAN whose unattractiveness is redeemed by kindly nature, generous spirit and GSOH, WLTM educated lady for discreet liaison. Box 3047.

SINGLE BLOKE, 31 – degree, city job etc, seeks similar girly. London. Box 4047.

SCEPTIC SEEKS SOULMATE – what more is there to say? (I suppose: I'm male, 48, W10). Photo appreciated. Box 3147.

40's PROFESSIONAL MALE, married, seeks lady for occasional daytime diversions. Age/status immaterial. Box 3247.

SUCCESSFUL FILMMAKER, youthful 42, (M) Kind, gentle, allegedly goodlooking, seeks intelligent, funny, attractive kindred spirit(F) under 35 to explore sharing diverse passions including history, microlight flying, art, wildlife filming walking and remote Cumbrian farmhouse. P.S. – mildly eccentric. Box 3347.

ATTRACTIVE, INTERESTING, humorous, professional man, 30s, attached – seeks woman for dangerous liaisons. London. Box 3647.

FERRARI DRIVER seeks 25/30 year old female navigator for cross country exploration and weekend rallies to deepest Yorkshire. Must be equipped for speed with photograph and full service history. Box 3847.

MALE, 28 YEARS OLD, computer programmer and net head, seeks woman to explore London with. Box 0645.

GENUINE, SUCCESSFUL businessman, 36, attached but unfulfilled, seeks long-term dangerous liaison with attractive soulmate to fill the gap in my life. Manchester. Box 3145.

HORNY, HEDONISTIC, hirsute muscular company director (36) seeks dirty bitch. London. Box 3545.

SUCCESSFUL BUSINESSMAN having achieved life's finer material needs, seeks attractive, sophisticated? lady to share them with. Live-in permanent basis to develop close relationship. Suitable lady will be 25-35 yrs. Benefits — own quality car + allowance + gold card. Send recent photos and reasons for your suitability. Genuine offer — the right lady will not be disappointed. Me? 40s, play tennis, eat out, trips abroad — you come too — cleaners, gardeners, drivers already employed for beautiful detached house. Should a close relationship develop your status would be that of partner/girlfriend, lady of the house. I am English and not ugly. Box Number 3947.

DOES MY FEMALE counterpart exist? Businessman, mid fifties, attached, apparently considered very attractive, 5'11", athletic build, happy, sophisticated, very sensual, would like to meet a similar woman for a single (important) discreet, regular, happy, erotic and sensual relationship in which we can indulge and savour each other's pleasures. London. Box 2447.

CHEERFUL, INTELLIGENT, attractive female, early 30's, single, loves cinema, music – seeks male equivalent under 40, for romance. West Midlands. Box 0547.

5'9", LONDON BASED, educated brunette, 32, likes conversation, arts – seeking similar taller male (25-40) for possible relationship. Box 1447.

BEAUTIFUL CLASSY long dark haired lady, 33, intelligent, affectionate, tactile, WLTM handsome, strong charactered, humorous, affluent male to love to bits – Photo please. Box 3546.

GERRARD DEPARDIEU lookalike seeks Yorkshire starlet age 25-30 to co-star in love story. Luxury travel will be required for location searches. Photograph essential but agent not required. Box 3747.

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Surname: _____

First Name: _____

Address: _____

_____

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Age: Height:

Occupation:

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Technical Qualification ❒

3. Your Personality

(tick which traits closely describe you)

❒ Affectionate ❒ Fashionable
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❒ Considerate ❒ Conventional
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4. Your Attitudes

(tick for yes, cross for no or leave blank)

❒ Do you involve yourself with community activities?
❒ Are you looking for one special relationship?
❒ Does your work make it difficult to meet new people?
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❒ Do you devote a lot of time to your social life?

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(sections 5. and 6. Please tick for a like, cross for dislike or leave blank for no preference.)

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❒ Sports/Keep fit ❒ Theatre/Arts
❒ Politics/History ❒ Watching TV
❒ Reading ❒ Smoking
❒ Travelling ❒ Astrology
❒ Science/Tech ❒ Children
❒ Cinema ❒ Homemaking
❒ Pets/Animals ❒ Gardening
❒ Pop music ❒ Countryside

6. Details of your ideal partner

Minimum age: Maximum age:

Height: min. max. Don't mind ❒

Marital status:

Single ❒ Divorced ❒
Widowed ❒ Separated ❒
Don't mind ❒

Build: Slight ❒ Medium ❒ Large ❒

Attractiveness: Very attractive ❒ Attractive ❒ Average ❒

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